

THE CHINESE RECORDER

VOL. LIII.

JUNE, 1922.

No. 6

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS.

Dr. C. Y. CHENG is Secretary of the China Continuation Committee, Chairman of the Chinese Home Missionary Society, Secretary of the China for Christ Movement and Chairman of the National Christian Conference. He was formerly pastor of an Independent Church in Peking.

Rev. R. K. EVANS is a missionary of the London Missionary Society. He is professor in Peking University.

Mr. J. H. OLDHAM is a Presbyterian and was formerly a missionary in India. He was Secretary of the Edinburgh Continuation Committee and is now Secretary of the International Missionary Committee which has taken its place.

Mrs. T. C. CHU is a member of the Methodist Church. She is a graduate of Wellesley College, a member of the National Committee of the Y.W.C.A. and President of the Shanghai Women's Club.

Dr. KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE was formerly a member of the Yale Mission at Changsha. He is now occupying the chair of Missions in Yale University and is working on a history of missions in China.

Mr. MARSHALL BROOMHALL, M. A. (Cambridge), was from 1890-1899 connected with the China Inland Mission. Since 1900 he has been Editorial Secretary of the China Inland Mission located in London, England.

Professor T. C. CHAO is a member of the Methodist Church and Professor of Sociology and Religion at Soochow University.

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Editorial Board.

Editor-in-chief. Rev. FRANK RAWLINSON, D.D.*

Associate Editors { Rev. G. F. FITCH, D.D.*
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Rev. J. L. STUART, D.D.
Rev. WALWORTH TYNG.

* Members of Executive Committee.

VOL. LIII

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Editorial

The Great Decision.

DID the Conference express in some measure the mind of Christians in China? Rural as well as urban districts were represented, all grades of training were in evidence, and "progressive" and "conservative"—both equally conscientious—participated in all phases of the Conference. The number who could speak in discussions was limited but there was no discrimination against any place, group or phase of thought. Indeed the delegates were so heterogeneous that in the beginning a common expression seemed a very hazy possibility. Yet the Conference did evolve a common mind and purpose. And this common mind was most clearly expressed on the most knotty issue. Some missionaries—no Chinese as far as we know—have stated that the Christian forces in China are already divided and will continue to remain so and probably become more so. Some have even felt justified in widening this division. Just what proportion of the Christian forces in China have been convinced of the inevitableness of this open split we do not know. But the Conference met this issue in a way that shows it is much less prominent in Christian thinking in China than we have thought. In plain words and acts the Conference said there is no need for us to move apart. To the resolution which expressed this conviction there was no opposition shown. It is evident that though we vary in polity and expressions of faith the Christian Movement in China has one faith. We ventured to say some time since that the crest of the divisive movement in China has been passed. We

are now convinced it is left behind us. There are signs that the same thing is happening in the West. We have passed the point of hammering on our differences to a deeper realization of our unity of aim, motive and spirit. Letters from abroad show that recent reports of conditions in China are having a bad effect on the thinking of those who do not know. Our future utterances on the problems of Christian work in China should be permeated with the generous spirit which dominated the Conference. We may not be able to go forward as fast as some wish and may move too rapidly for others, yet we can keep pace together. The Christian Movement in China has been blamed by some for a measure of leadership in dividing the Church. The action of the Conference makes it necessary and possible for us to take definite steps to correct that impression. The chief decision of the first representative gathering of the Chinese Church shows that Christians in China desire to stand together and to work together. That is a great decision and worthy of support everywhere equal to that given it in the Conference.

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**The Great
Fundamental.**

A MAGAZINE which recently passed under our eye drew attention to the fact that recent emphasis on "fundamentals" tends to obscure the one fundamental—love. Since "God is Love" it is obvious that here we have the fundamental of fundamentals. He is not "doctrine." He is not theology. He is not polity. He is love. We have a habit of putting the way we say things before this great fundamental. Our differences are of the intellect. Love is primarily of the spirit. Just as Christ must have the preëminence in our loyalty so love must have the preëminence in our practice. Different opinions and convictions need not stop love any more than different kinds of earth in the bed of a stream hinder the flow of the water. The Conference upheld this great fundamental. We should like to see the striking phrase struck off by Dr. Lew become the motto of the Christian Church throughout the world, "She shall teach her members to agree to differ but resolve to love." Love tends to slow up when one opinion or one conviction is offered as its only channel. While it may be desirable that we should all have one form of doctrine it does not seem to be commanded. But love is the fulfilling of the law and a special commandment to love one another was given by Christ. On this fundamental both Christ and Paul lay supreme emphasis. This was the fundamental that dominated the Conference. To keep this fundamental where it has been put by its place in the nature of God and the words of Christ and Paul will provide the only atmosphere that will help find a common solution to differences in opinion and conviction. The supremacy of love is the distinguishing mark of the Christian. Let us "resolve to love."

**Faith of the
Conference.**

BEFORE submitting the resolution appointing a National Christian Council the Business Committee will submit the following for adoption by the Conference:

A proposal has been made to the Conference that a doctrinal statement expressing fundamental Christian beliefs should be embodied in the resolution appointing a National Christian Council.

We, the members of the Conference, joyfully confess our faith in, and renew our allegiance to, God the Father Almighty, Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Saviour, Who loved us and gave Himself for our sins, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; and acknowledge our loyalty to the Holy Scriptures as the supreme guide of faith and conduct, and to the fundamental Christian beliefs held by the churches to which we severally belong. The Conference, however, is not constituted as a church council with authority to pass upon questions of doctrine and of church polity or to draw up a credal or doctrinal statement of any kind. While the Conference believes it to be a matter of vital importance that the Church of Christ in China should be established on a basis of true faith and sound doctrine, it recognizes that the authority to determine what are the essential affirmations of the Christian faith lies with the several churches of which those attending this Conference are members. Any National Christian Council which may be appointed by this Conference will not in any sense be a Church Council, and therefore not competent to exercise ecclesiastical functions. It will be an advisory body which will seek to carry forward the work of this Conference and to bring the representatives of the different churches and missions in China together, in order that they may mutually enrich one another through common counsel, and will take action in matters of common interest only when it has reason to believe that the action taken will be in accordance with the wishes of the co-operating bodies. (This resolution was adopted by the National Christian Conference by a rising vote and the singing of the doxology.)

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The Council.

WHAT will the National Christian Council do? It has attained in the method of its appointment to that representative character which many felt so necessary to any organization of its kind. In itself it is a symbol of the Christian Movement. Through it is achieved expression of our oneness of aim in the midst of multiplicity of method and form. It embodies the desire of the Christians in China to progress in Christian Unity though even its members are far from knowing just what form that unity should take. One might well ask, From the viewpoint of the desire for Christian unity in what direction did the Conference move? Assuming that a

larger measure of unity is desired, is there any hint of the polity that would express it? We must admit that as yet there is none. And being made up of representatives of all polities it is difficult to see how the Conference or the Council could yet give any hint along this line. We may finally get a unification of present polities that will give us something joined historically to all and yet new. But we shall yet learn to express our faith more together. In the meantime the Council will help discover and develop a common Christian mind. In doing this it may take a different angle of work from what has been anticipated. Whatever the approach determined on we need and shall look to this Council to promote wider understanding during the ten years that may elapse before the next National Christian Conference. We should like to see one Conference in which there would be a frank display of convictions. We do not want this display of beliefs or convictions simply to determine which is the stronger or held by the most so as to enthrone it. We must discover the common elements in them and develop them together and find a way to move together more between the remaining differences. We believe that the unity of spirit displayed in the Conference was due to such common elements in our faith and convictions. If the Council can make more evident the one life which animates all Christians it will have justified itself. In doing this it may move slower than some wish. In discovering secretaries, laying out its budget and working out its program it will need our prayers. The Council is ours by appointment. We must make it ours by sympathy and support.

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Exploring Christ.

IN a conversation recently with a friend the remark was made that the British Student Movement invites people of all shades of thought to "come and explore Christ with us." That is what we all need to do more. A book written in the spirit of this invitation is that by William Temple, Bishop of Manchester, on "The Universality of Christ." It frankly endeavors to answer some modern questions. Now this book compares, as far as space will permit, the religion of Jesus with other religions and finds it supreme and universal. It also recognizes that science and philosophy have their place in Christian thinking. It is well adapted for students of college grade. It is full of suggestive ideas. Liberty is said to be the most fundamental of the principles governing Christ's ministry. The supreme and peculiar feature of deity as revealed in Christ is "Triumphant sacrifice." Love is always supreme in the sense that there is no conceivable situation in which it is not possible to show absolute perfection of love. Of the Creed he asks, "Where is the emphasis of the Creed? Is it, I believe

in God? Or is it, I believe in *God?*" That is a most important transfer of emphasis. If it were more regularly made there would be less "spiky" opinions around. Again, "Either in science or religion, the first requirement is that a man should stop troubling about himself and concern himself with the object in hand." Another striking word is that the only possible mode of omnipotence in a world that contains free finite spirits is expressed in this quotation, "when He is reviled He reviles not again, and when He suffers He threatens not." Love seeks not to impose its will but to win a free response. This little volume is thought-provoking and instructive. It is published by the Student Christian Movement, London. We should like to see it widely read.

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Are Vacations Overdone?

WE have received a racy statement on the way some missionaries are overdoing the vacation idea. The writer speaks of "two or three monthers" in a way that implies an experience with such to the point of disgust. Reference is made to the way business men stick by their work in the heat as over against those missionaries who spend so much time on the hills. We are inclined to think that this tendency to overdo vacations is local and confined to comparatively few of the missionary body. As far as our observation goes, there is in general a tendency for missionaries to go away in summer less than formerly. This may be due to stern economic necessity as prices for bungalows give colour to the idea we have heard hinted at that missionaries are plutocrats in disguise. The writer rightly draws attention to the rules of the United States Government by which one month's vacation with pay is allowed and thinks this generous indeed. The fact is brought out, too, that many of the supporters, of these missionaries who spend over much time in vacations, work all the summer in places as warm as those from which the vacationists seeks to escape. It is impossible for all of the 4,500 missionaries on the field at any one time to go away all the time. Many each summer must stick by the "stuff." We know of some who for years have had no vacation, which fact can be set off against the "two or three monthers." Some constructive suggestions were made that are worth repeating. All time over one month should be counted "sick leave." Much more use should be made of the summer for practical work. All of us, according to this writer, should adopt the principle of one month's regular vacation and plan to keep our business going three hundred and sixty-five days in a year. The opportunity for teaching illiterates that summers offer is pointed out. Teachers might use the time when school is closed to visit their pupils more. We wonder again, as often before, why summer schools cannot become more the rule; it would be no innovation to the

Chinese. When all is said, one thing remains. We must guard against overdoing vacations. No business man should be able to say as we are told one did, "It is only missionaries who can afford to spend two or three months at Kuling. We cannot be away from our work so long or afford the expense every year." It is probable, as our informant said, that some of us need to face this problem more squarely.

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**New Christian
Alignment.**

THE following is taken from the *Christian Century* of April 20, 1922. The recent Conference seemed to exhibit something of what is here indicated. "And this means that the only true alignment of religious forces is not denominational but intellectual and spiritual. Between the progressive group in any one of the denominations, on the one side, with its insistence upon the great Protestant principles of scholarly interpretation of the scriptures, renunciation of ecclesiastical dogmatism, and a vital presentation of the Gospel as a personal and social message for the men of to-day, and the reactionary and legalistic group on the other, real and enduring fellowship is most difficult. The progressive forces in all the churches have a basis of fellowship and co-operation which is the only hope of the church of God in these nervous and distracted times. The true alignment is that of faith in the living Christ and his living Gospel, which to-day, as in the first century of the Christian society, is the power of God to save."

* * *

Congratulations.

WE are glad to unite our congratulations to those of many other friends on the fact that the Senate of London University has conferred on the Rev. J. Percy Bruce, M.A., the degree of Doctor of Literature. Rev. Bruce is a member of the English Baptist Mission in Shantung and has been for some time a member of our editorial board. Mr. Bruce has been making a study of Chinese philosophy especially of the philosophers of the Sung Dynasty. The results of his research work will shortly be published in three volumes. It is in recognition of that work that the well earned degree has been granted. This degree is one of the best, most coveted and most strictly guarded.

Contributed Articles

The Message of the Church

[This is the Report of Commission III. This Commission was composed of Chinese only. They were assisted by strong Committees of Chinese in Soochow, Peking, Canton, Hankow, and Foochow.—Editor.]

I. To Christians

A. THE UNITED CHURCH

1. **W**E Chinese Christians who represent the various leading denominations express our regret that we are divided by the denominationalism which comes from the West.

2. We are not unaware of the diverse gifts through the denominations that have been used by God for the enrichment of the Church.

3. Yet we recognize fully that denominationalism is based upon differences, the historical significance of which, however real and vital to the missionaries from the West, are not shared by us Chinese. Therefore, denominationalism instead of being a source of inspiration, has been and is a source of confusion, bewilderment, and inefficiency.

4. We recognize also most vividly the crying need of the Christian salvation for China to-day, and we firmly believe that it is only the united Church that can save China, for our task is great and enough strength can only be attained through solid unity.

5. Therefore, in the name of the Lord, Who prayed that all may be one, we appeal to all those who love the same Lord to follow His command and be united into one Church, catholic and indivisible, for the salvation of China.

6. We believe that there is an essential unity among all the Chinese Christians, and that we are voicing the sentiment of the whole Chinese Christian body in claiming that we have the desire and the possibility to effect a speedy realization of corporate unity, and in calling upon missionaries and representatives of the churches in the West, through self-sacrificial devotion to our Lord, to remove all the obstacles in order that Christ's prayer for unity may be fulfilled in China.

7. We confidently hope that the Church of China thus united will be able to serve as an impetus to the speedy healing of the broken body of Christ in the West.

NOTE.—Readers of the RECORDER are reminded that the Editorial Board assumes no responsibility for the views expressed by the writers of articles published in these pages.

B. THE INDIGENOUS CHURCH

1. We Chinese Christians do hereby acknowledge that the Church is the spiritual home of Christians where we receive a spiritual nurture which should not be alien to the racial inheritance and spiritual experience of our people.
2. We register our appreciation and gratitude for the devoted and self-sacrificial service of the missionaries who have helped to build up the Christian Church in China, and for the Churches in the West which have made the service of these missionaries possible.
3. But we wish to voice the sentiment of our people that the wholesale, uncritical acceptance of the traditions, forms and organizations of the West and the slavish imitation of these are not conducive to the building of a permanent genuine Christian Church in China.
4. We notice, moreover, that the Chinese Church is becoming conscious of her own unique mission and duty to-day.
5. The history of China, the characteristics of the people, the nature of the work, the results of our past experience, and the rapidly changing conditions of the country all demand an indigenous Church which will present an indigenous Christianity, a Christianity which does not sever its continuity with the historical Churches but at the same time takes cognizance of the spiritual inheritance of the Chinese race.
6. Therefore, we appeal to all the followers of Jesus Christ in China, with united effort, through systematic giving, to reach the goal of self-support, through persistent practice, fearless of experiment and failures, to reach the goal of self-government, and through religious education, an adequately trained leadership, and devoted personal work, to attain the goal of self-propagation.
7. We declare further that the time has come when Chinese Christians should make a careful study and with courageous experimentation find out what are the forms and organizations and methods that are most practicable and helpful for the establishment of an indigenous Church.
8. We call upon the missionary leaders of the Church to assist the Chinese in carrying out this great task by their useful advice and by giving unfettered freedom to the Chinese Christians in these experiments.
9. We confidently hope that the time will soon come when the Church of China will repay in part for that which she has bountifully received from her mother Churches in the West, the loving tribute of the daughter—contributions in thought, life and achievement for the enrichment of the Church catholic.

C. THE DEEPER CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH

1. We recognize that the personal conduct of individual Christians and the behaviour of the Church as a body is the living testimony to the Gospel of Christ.

2. We recognize that China is now passing through a critical stage of transition and in every walk of life there is a crying need of moral character.

3. We thank God for His creation of opportunities which have changed the indifferent attitude of the Chinese nation to Christianity, to an attitude of close scrutiny. This demands an even more genuine Christian life on the part of every Christian and on the part of the Church as a body.

4. We confess with humiliation the failure of the Church to live up to the opportunity God has given her. The personal conduct of some Christians and the life of the Church as a body have left much to be desired.

5. We recognize that the task of evangelization cannot be efficiently done without a genuine Christ-like life.

6. Therefore, we appeal to all those who call themselves Christians to rededicate and reconsecrate their lives and pray that the living power of the Holy Spirit may help us to glorify the name of Christ.

D. MORE DILIGENT STUDY OF THE WORD OF GOD

1. We Chinese Christians accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the supreme guide of faith and practice.

2. We do hereby express our appreciation of the patient, persistent and diligent work of those servants of God who made the Bible known unto our people.

3. We are fully conscious of the fact that the Chinese Church as a Church is yearning for a Bible for the Chinese which is the work of the Chinese. Just as the English Bible is the work of English scholars and the German Bible is the result of the labour of German men of God, so the Chinese need a version of the Scriptures which is a product of the reverent scholarship of the Chinese race.

From the experience of our work and the rapid advancement of learning and in view of the future task of the Church, we have come to the conclusion that we must have an indigenous version of the Holy Scriptures just as we need an indigenous Church.

4. We, therefore, call upon all Christians in China to study more diligently the Word of God, first of all individually in an ever-increasing

devotion for one's own spiritual life, for comfort, for hope, for faith, and to gain strength for Christian service.

5. And secondly, we call upon the students in schools and colleges to see the glory of Biblical scholarship and to offer their lives to its thorough study, preparing themselves by the grace of God to be adequate interpreters and expositors of the Word of God, in our noble Chinese tongue, so that the people of China shall share in full measure with the people of the West the splendour and joy of the Truth.

6. We believe that since the Bible is the Word of God, the truth of God fears no test. It can stand any investigation of a reverent heart. We wish to make known that we fear no application of any genuine scientific method to the study of the Holy Scriptures.

7. But we wish to make it clear that the study of the Holy Scriptures should not merely be for its literary or intellectual interest but should mainly and primarily be for the guidance of actual living. We as a Church hereby renew the pledge to follow the light of Holy Scripture in our individual, social and national living.

8. We hereby lay emphasis upon the value of the *whole* Bible and call upon all Christians in their religious education in the home, in schools and colleges, in the Church and its seminaries, to make the Bible and the *whole* Bible central in their teaching.

9. We firmly believe that the Bible is God's Message to every individual, irrespective of educational attainments. So it is our aim that the Holy Scriptures should be read by every citizen of the Republic. The high percentage of illiteracy among our people should be faithfully dealt with by the united effort of the whole Church, in order to hasten the day when the Holy Scriptures shall become an open book to all who have eyes to read.

E. SOCIAL REGENERATION

1. We take this occasion to state in most emphatic terms our realization of the tragic reality of Sin, its hideousness and its all-pervasiveness, and to testify to the saving grace of Jesus Christ, through whose death we are reconciled to the holy and righteous God.

2. We believe that sin is not only fundamentally an individual problem but that it is also social. We believe that an unjust economic order, an unrighteous political regime, unfair treatment of any human being, or of any group, is unacceptable to the righteous and loving God.

We take this occasion to express our appreciation of the various forms of social service which have been rendered to our people through the earnest efforts of the servants of God and sustained by the generous support of the faithful in the West.

We confess our failure to meet adequately the social needs of the Chinese people thus far.

We are further conscious of the ever-increasing and crying need of social regeneration in China to-day. We recognize that a thorough-going application of Christian social teachings is of primary importance.

We hereby call upon the whole Church to proclaim justice as part of the love of God, and to apply Christ's teaching of justice in our social life.

We hereby call upon the Church to mobilize all her forces to work for the regeneration of the home, of economic conditions, of political standards, of educational, industrial and commercial life, in thought and in practice, through the spiritualizing power of Christ, and to accomplish it at any cost and at whatever sacrifice the Church may suffer, so that we may hasten the speedy coming of God's Kingdom and the full realization of His will on earth as in heaven.

F. INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD

1. We Chinese Christians believe that God has made of one blood all nations that may dwell on the face of the earth and that He is no respecter of persons or of nations, but the loving Father of all.

2. We express our appreciation of the manifestation of international brotherhood through the missionary effort of the last century in China, but we at the same time express our deepest regret that unfortunate circumstances have accompanied the introduction of Christian work into China, and that the history of the Church of China has been darkened by the association with repeated incidents of national humiliation which have been one of the greatest obstacles to the speedy evangelization of our race.

We of the Church confess her failure to stay the hands of the so-called Christian governments of the West in their unchristian exploitation of and aggression upon the sovereignty of China.

We firmly believe that the teaching and the life of Christ have taught us beyond any doubt the possibility and the necessity of international world-brotherhood. With Him nothing is impossible.

3. We hereby call upon everyone who serves in the Christian Church in China to seize every opportunity to promote international friendship and fight together against any international injustice.

4. We further believe that the starting point for genuine internationalism is afforded by the providence of God within the Church of China, in the development of which different nations have heretofore had a share.

5. We express our appreciation of the good examples of international comity and co-operation among the missionaries of different

nationalities and especially to the increasing effort for union work in educational and medical service. We confess at the same time that the relationship between foreign missionaries and the Christian workers, partly due to almost unavoidable circumstances, and partly due to human weakness, has left much to be desired. We are voicing the sentiment of the loyal and devoted servants of the Church in all parts of China to ask for a more vigorous effort on the part of missionaries to improve the conditions, to emphasize Chinese leadership, to sacrifice individual preferences and such national and racial prejudices as have in many instances retarded the speedy formation of an indigenous Church in China. We also call upon Chinese Christian workers to study the problem of co-operation and to be persistent and patient as to their faith in its practicability, for only through co-operation can the great task of the evangelization of China be accomplished.

6. We as a Church believe that God has a special mission for each nation on this earth; that each nation has a definite contribution to make to the progress and enrichment of humanity; that China, which has been preserved by Him throughout these ages as an independent and sovereign nation, has her distinct destiny and contribution to make to the world; that in the present world conflict and restlessness and under the yoke of accumulated national humiliation, we Chinese Christians feel at one with our fellow-citizens that we must turn somewhere for genuine love as the only solution for the present international situation. Therefore, we call upon the whole Church to exert her influence to demand from time to time adequate hearings from the nations of the world for our claim to the inalienable right of our nation to her sovereignty and to her unfettered opportunity for development and growth, and that the Church should work with untiring zeal through some definite program to promote such international service as will attain the end we seek.

7. Furthermore, we call upon all Chinese Christian pastors and other teachers to Christianize the rapidly developing national consciousness, that we as a nation may be a witness to the whole world of the wonderful gift of the peace-loving nature with which God has endowed our race.

G. EVANGELISM

1. We Chinese Christians declare that we have the commission from the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, to proclaim the Gospel to every creature.

2. We express our appreciation for the work of the missionaries who through untold difficulties have blazed the way and laid down the foundation of a great structure for national evangelization, and for the Christian Churches in the West through whose faithful support the missionary work has been developed and attained its present growth.

3. We confess with humiliation that we Chinese Christians have fallen short in thorough-going efforts to carry on the noble task which is ours.

4. In view of the small percentage of Christians in proportion to the population, the vast extent of territory where darkness still prevails, and the lack of indigenuous and vigorous presentation of the Gospel to the various classes of society, we sense the appalling need of a thorough-going evangelism.

5. We hereby call upon all the followers of Jesus Christ to go forth with renewed zeal and consecrated hearts, with persistent efforts, and through united and definite programs to evangelize every part of China.

6. We hereby declare that in our evangelistic efforts we stand solidly on the evangelical faith of the Christian Church, the faith which has given us our genuine religious experience and which has led us into intimate relationship with God our Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. We also emphasize that the evangelical faith which we proclaim is also the faith of an abundant life which actually manifests God's love as revealed through Jesus Christ and which is being continually revealed and witnessed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

7. We take this opportunity to state our religious experience in our own tongue and in our own way as a summons to this evangelical faith from the Chinese Christians to their non-Christian fellow-citizens.

II. To Non-Christians.

[Owing to lack of space we have been compelled to cut this section. Editor.—]

A. CHINA'S NEED OF CHRIST

Now the foregoing plans for national salvation are, in the main, not only not opposed to the aim of the Christian religion, but on the contrary, Christians everywhere are pleased to assist such efforts recognizing, as they do, that every well-considered method is of some help to the country. Nevertheless, while many of these plans appear to us Christians as good indeed, they do not seem to us to touch the root of China's disease. They do not offer a fundamental and permanent solution of her difficulties, and why? Because the need of China to-day is essentially a spiritual one and, in our opinion, such a need can only be supplied by the Christian religion.

Listen! People of China! What China needs is really Jesus Christ. With Him all her problems can be solved. Without Him all other methods and plans are of secondary value, for they do not touch the root trouble. The purpose of this Message is to introduce Jesus

Christ to the people of China and to exalt Him and Him alone. We, therefore, ardently hope that the people of this land will give their close attention to this solemn message from the Christian Church.

When we say that China needs Christ, we do not mean that China needs all the forms, customs, and rites of Western Churches, nor even that she needs to accept all that these Churches teach. Nor, again, do we hold up all Christians as examples of what Jesus meant His followers to be, for not all Christians have the spirit of Christ. We cannot say that all the ideas of the disciples of Christ are free from error, neither can we say that the conduct of the men in the Church is always the highest possible. There are many individual Christians whose lives do truly reflect the teaching and the spirit of Christ, and there are many works of the Church which are fraught with untold blessings. However, it is difficult for all to overcome their selfishness at once, and to live lives in perfect accord with the perfect virtue of Jesus Christ. We say this to our shame, both before God and in the presence of the people in this great country. We reprove ourselves for these shortcomings; we resolve immediately to amend. What we do mean, however, is that it is our firm conviction that Christ is able to meet China's deepest need, for the Christ Whom we recommend is a present Christ, a living Christ, a Christ of power who is able to-day, as in the past, to manifest Himself as Ruler of all in the hearts of men, in society, in the state, in the world. He once said, "I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." These words completely embody in themselves the spirit of the Christian Religion.

1. Christ is the Revealer of God.

One great thing which Christ did when He came into the world, was to reveal God to men. Now Jesus by His words and acts showed forth God to us, for all His acts and words pointed to God as their great Source. Do we wish to know what God is like? Do we wish to know the relation between God and men? Then we must look at Jesus Himself, listen to His words, and look upon His acts. Then shall we clearly know the character of God as well as the relations between God and men. True we cannot perfectly know God. Nevertheless, Christ has fully and truly revealed Him to us, and all that we need to know of God, and all that is required to strengthen our faith, we may learn in the person of Jesus Christ, His Son. This is not indeed the one and only source of knowledge of God, for we may also behold the acts of God in the world apart from Jesus Christ, and learn from them something of Him; but what we so find out is, after all, very limited, whereas Christ reveals God to men with perfect clearness. Such a revelation of God has tremendous consequences for men. Because of this fact it is possible

to confirm men's view of God, and increase the sincerity of their reverence and love towards Him.

Christians to-day, relying upon the words of Jesus, believe that they have obtained a correct view of God, a well-grounded faith in Him, so that they regard the doctrine of God as something which cannot be changed, viz.: that there is only one God, Ruler of all; that apart from Him there is no God. God is the Creator of heaven and earth and of all things. We worship Him as the One and Only supreme Lord.

Christ declared that God is perfect love, perfect holiness, and perfect righteousness. His character is summarily comprehended in these terms. When Christ was on earth His usual designation of God was "Father." His relation to God was not that of a subject to a ruler, nor of a servant to a lord, but their natures were as the natures of Father and Son. He also taught men to think of God as their Father. This view has changed many erroneous and shallow notions about God in the minds of men. It gives new meaning to the common saying "All within the four seas are brethren." This saying is true because it is based upon the fact to which the Christian Religion bears witness, that God is our Father. On the other hand it follows that if we cannot regard God as our Father, then we cannot look upon men as our brethren. But if we confess God as our Father, and love and reverence Him, it follows at once that we cannot but love and reverence the children of God, that is, our brethren.

Again, the God of Christians is Spirit. He is above all and in all. He is not far away but lives in us and guides us according to our needs. He is not only without us but also within us. Not only does He teach men to become good. He is a power in our hearts; we can obtain His Spirit in fullness within our hearts. These mysterious facts we have learned from the life of Jesus, and also from our own experience.

2. *Christ is the Saviour of Men.*

The great blessing wrought by Jesus Christ for men was accomplished through the sacrifice of his own life, the pouring forth of His own heart's blood. His death at the hands of the religious leaders of His own nation, has come to be regarded by Christians of all lands as the supreme revelation of the love of God, and of the wickedness of men. We Christians believe that in His death Jesus bore in His heart the burden of the sin of all mankind, and opened for men the only way of escape from death unto life, the only way of access unto God. He willingly poured out His heart's blood that men might be saved from sin, and reconciled unto God. In His death and subsequent victory over death, He overcame sin once for all, so that sin had no dominion over Him. This victory He wrought for us that we might share in

its merits. Hence it is that we confess Him as the Saviour of all men, and our hope for the life to come.

The most persistent fact of life is sin. Yet the majority of men do not understand what sin really is, neither can they estimate its gravity. If they try to do so, it is not according to the standards of God. Now Jesus Christ really comprehended the importance of sin, and hence was willing to sacrifice everything, including His own life, to effect men's escape from sin, to obtain their emancipation and to reconcile sinful men to a righteous God. If He was willing to do this marvellous and unparalleled thing, surely sin should be universally feared and hated; otherwise there need not have been so great a price paid to save men from their sins.

Seeing that the relationship of God and men is so very intimate, when men forsake the true God, serve another, or openly oppose Him, or live as though there were no God, or deliberately act in opposition to His will, such conduct, we say, is assuredly disrespectful, a breach of His law, a sin against the Most High, for God is love, and love is the foundation of goodness. When men act in opposition to love, they are opposing goodness. Did you ever stop to think that sin is also something more than transgression of law? Those who seek to live a merely negative life are also guilty of sin. Sin is doing what we ought not. It is also not doing what we ought to do.

When we come to analyze sin carefully it dawns upon us that seeking one's own selfish end, whether in disregard of the will of God or at the expense of one's fellow-men, is a good general definition of sin. At bottom, sin is seeking one's own gain. Alas, that men should think it better to seek their own profit rather than to serve God! If men seek their own happiness only they naturally care not for the sufferings of others, and the result is that by seeking their own advantage they frequently grow callous to the sufferings which they impose upon others.

Jesus thus made it clear that sin is that which stands between a man and the attainment of the life purpose for which God has given him life. Sin is a missing of the mark, and Jesus lived and died that men might understand the purpose of their existence and receive through Him the strength to attain it. This Jesus calls "finding one's life."

From what we have said, it is evident that sin in the world is universal. It is found everywhere, not only in China, but also in other countries; not only to-day, but in ancient times. All are under the power of sin, so that in the hearts of men there is a sort of spiritual pain, a sort of undefinable oppression; they are not free; they cannot save themselves from this foe. As Paul said: "What I would do, I do not, and the sin I would not, that I do. O miserable man that I am! Who can save me from its tyranny?" These words faithfully reflect the condition of all men. Their own conscience accuses them, and

they unconsciously utter this mournful cry: "Would that we might escape the thralldom of sin, and enjoy the liberty of the sons of God."

The love of God, O joyous fact! If sin rises mountain high, God's love rises higher, and has still greater strength. It was Jesus Christ who represented this love of God in the world, and with this love as a sharp weapon He opposed evil. Sin and love are forever incompatible. The greatest revelation of God's love was in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The "cross" was originally a Roman form of death penalty; it was the reward of evil-doing. Nevertheless, because in it was revealed the love of God, when Christ sacrificed Himself upon it, henceforth the shameful thing was turned into a symbol to be revered and loved. Jesus went about constantly doing good, and showing kindness to the sick and the unfortunate. Thus did He reveal the love of God for men. But His main object was to save mankind from sin, and this is symbolized in the cross.

Jesus lived and died, conquering sin on the cross in order to restore men to their original state, which they had lost through sin. Men originally came from God, but sin made a breach between men and God. This breach Jesus closed by overcoming sin, and bringing men back to their original position. Hence to be a Christian is simply to be a true man, a man as he was meant to be; for man, in the eyes of God, is of priceless value. Christ perceived the value of men, as well as the misery which sin had brought upon them; therefore was He willing to shed His blood for men, and offer Himself a sacrifice in their behalf so that they might be freed from the bondage of sin.

3. Christ is the Lord of Men.

Jesus Christ is also our Lord in virtue of the fact that He overcame death, and overthrew the power of sin, completing God's saving work for mankind. When He was on earth He was subject to all manner of physical limitations; but now He is risen in the spirit, and is not bound by any such things. Time and space limited Him then; to-day His life and power can enter into men's hearts everywhere. Formerly He wandered up and down Judea in bodily form, but now, although it is a long time since He dwelt among men, nevertheless, though invisible to us, He still dwells among men, a spiritual body, our Risen Lord. In virtue of this fact, He is no mere Christ of Western Asia who lived two thousand years ago, in Palestine; He has no racial and national limitations; He is the Living Lord of all men.

4. Christ is God Incarnate.

But to us who are followers of Christ, He is more than a mere man, even a Perfect Man. His great loving heart towards sinful men, His ability to save the world from the grip and power of sin, His

present and living power in the hearts of those who follow His way, all convince us that He is more than man. Our own religious experience testifies to the truthfulness of the Holy Scriptures regarding the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Him we behold the character and the mind of the Almighty God. Owing to our limited, finite understanding, we cannot look into the deep mystery of infinite God, nor fathom His eternal purposes. This Jesus Whom we adore and worship as our Master and Lord stands in the history of humanity, and in the hearts of men to-day, so far above other men, so close to the God we know, that together with the disciples who followed Him in Palestine we bow in humble adoration and cry, "My Lord and my God."

B. RESULTS OF FOLLOWING CHRIST.

According to the foregoing, Christ is not some distant and vague spirit with whom we cannot come into any real contact. He is not one whose teachings we can merely inquire into but whose help we cannot claim. He is our present Help, our constant Deliverer, and our sure Guide on life's journey. Seeing that Christ has such intimate relations with us, seeing that His influence upon our lives is so deep, we surely must assert that He fills the spiritual needs of the people of this country as none other can do.

1. *Christ Regenerates Men.*

Those who come to Christ must become completely new. New thoughts, new desires, new wills, new purposes, new strength, new life are given them—all is changed. This does not necessarily mean that upon accepting Christ men should give up their possessions or change their occupations. Former possessions, former knowledge, former experience, former abilities, are still all there. The merchant is still a merchant. The man who pursues knowledge still continues his quest. The politician is still a politician. The trader remains a trader still. Their place in society, in the home, in the nation, is still theirs. If formerly they believed in truth and manifested some virtue, they are not to throw these away on account of Christ; on the contrary, they are to manifest these things to a still further degree; only when it comes to sin and to wickedness will there be a great change. Fear will be changed into courage; hatred will be changed into love; stinginess will be changed into benevolence; weakness will be changed into strength—yea, in all these things there will be a complete transformation, the more men grow into the likeness of Christ the greater and more complete will be the transformation.

Now there are many people who are forced by reason of conscience to approve of Jesus Christ and welcome His teaching; they would like

to be His disciples, but there is one thing in the way. Jesus insists that men's nature must be completely transformed. He uses the striking phrase "born again" which means true repentance on the part of men, seeking for God's forgiveness, and giving up all things that are in opposition to God's Holy Will. The result is that they hesitate, and go back, or go half way, and thus never reach the goal.

2. Christ Produces Courage to Oppose Sin.

Those who follow Christ must oppose evil. Sin is the great enemy of mankind. It must be entirely abolished. Personal and social sin are the great enemies of the disciples of Christ. Trusting in the Almighty God, we will fight against evil until complete victory crowns our efforts. To all evil conduct, impure thoughts, bad customs, now, also condoned by society, all immoral trades—to all these Christians are inflexibly opposed. There is to be absolutely no compromise with evil; there is no possibility of neutrality in this war. Such is the emphatic pronouncement of the Christian Religion.

3. Christ Leads Men to Communion with God.

Those who follow Christ need ceaselessly to commune with God. This idea of human fellowship with God is not a visionary and baseless idea, but a solid and well-proved fact. By means of prayer and the study of the Scriptures we obtain wings to our souls whereby we are able to rise superior to common and earthly things and fly up to the very presence of God. By studying the Holy Scriptures and searching into their inner meaning, we behold how God has dealt with men in the past. By sincere prayer, as a pure offering to God, we become acceptable to Him, and daily meet with Him. The Christian Religion is a spiritual religion. It is only as men commune with God that they obtain strength for right living. In all ages countless disciples of Jesus Christ have been able to stand up without cringing to wealth, or bowing the knee to force, faithful even unto death. Whence did they derive the strength to accomplish all this? Our reply is, by loving and trusting communion with God.

C. THE GOSPEL OF SALVATION.

1. For the Individual.

The Gospel of Christ makes two appeals, one to the individual and the other to society. The individual and society are mutually complementary. They act and react on one another. Both need to be saved. Every man must decide for himself whether he will acknowledge God, and accept Christ as his Saviour. He must not

blindly follow what others have said or done, but must personally experience God's saving work. On one occasion Christ asked His disciples: "What do the outsiders say about me?" The disciples answered: "Some beholding your gravity say you are like the Prophet Elijah; others beholding your meekness compare you to the Prophet Jeremiah—in fact there is a diversity of opinion." Then Jesus said: "Never mind what other people say about Me, what I want to know is, what do you think about Me?" A disciple named Peter answered as the representative of the rest, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." These words of Peter's expressed the feelings of his heart: he had long followed Christ, until he had an assured opinion of Him, and at this time, he spoke without hesitation. Such is the experience of the man who believes in Christ. How terrible is the oppression of sin in our hearts; how bitter the remorse! When we receive the pardon of God, behold what joy overflows within us! Our faith in God is assured, and we practise the will of Jesus with zealous earnestness. We have a fixed resolve to serve our fellow men—all these things are the experiences of the individual. Christian experience is not following the crowd, waving flags, and hurraing, but is a real experience of the individual life.

Are we anxious to reform society? Then we must first be anxious to reform ourselves, for without good individuals, how is it possible to renovate society? If we would discover the reason why the national affairs are not flourishing, why society is not reformed, why justice is daily deteriorating, why morality is in the dust—the answer simply is that individuals do not reform themselves. Hence, the Christian Religion lays special emphasis upon this matter of individual salvation, for each individual is of priceless value, without distinction between great and small, poor and rich, wise and simple, Chinese and foreign; all alike must be transformed and obtain a new life. Suppose we change the form of government, without changing the heart of the men who carry on the government; suppose we change the customs of society, but do not change the members of society; such a proceeding is if we were to change the liquid, but not change the medicine in the liquid. Without essential change all is in vain. The essential change is a spiritual change wrought by God Himself within the individual.

2. *For Society.*

Now the individual is closely related to the society of which he forms a part. The individual's goodness or wickedness influences society. Similarly the condition of society has a great influence upon the individual for good or evil. Hence it is that Christian Religion pays particular attention to this question of social salvation. Christ's

teaching regarding society was not embodied in any formal program, or particular plan of work. The thing He did was to lay down an object to be kept in view, viz. to plant society firmly upon the foundation of God's love. Jesus did not go into details. He simply set forth this great principle of social reform, and this for the obvious reason that different times require different measures. The level of men's thoughts differs; the questions differs; the questions of one age differ from the questions of another. Each country has its own ideas; nevertheless, the great foundation for the reform of society is the same, at all times and in all places. The object of Jesus is to organize the whole of society on the foundation of love. The social needs of China to-day differ from the needs of the time of Christ in Judea. The needs of other countries also differ from those of China, but the reform of society in China is most urgent, and love should be the foundation of the new social structure. This is the Glad Tidings of Jesus to the Chinese people to-day.

Having said this much, we are bound to add that the Church in China has much to mourn over, and accuse herself of, in reference to this matter of social salvation, for her influence upon society is not so far very evident. The Scriptures say that we are to be as a light or as salt, but as a matter of fact, we have had but little effect upon society. There are still too many points in which the Church condones the faults of society, thus permitting her light to be hid under a bushel or the salt to appear to have lost its savour. At this point, the Church in China must feel a deep shame, and put forth all her strength, so that in the matter of social salvation, as well as individual salvation, she may be able to come up to the standards and ideals of her Lord; that her light may be as the shining sun, ever increasing in brightness, and shining into every corner of society. Now the thought of Christ concerning the regeneration of society is in many points opposed to the present state of things. Hence the followers of Jesus have made up their minds that they must accept the plan of Christ for changing the world, and gradually make it an actuality. Although we cannot say that we have attained our end, yet the seed of this new society has already been planted in the earth. Inasmuch as it has life in it, it will sooner or later spring up and come to fruition. To be sure, the Church has met with many obstacles. Naturally, if we are to accomplish the creation of a new society, we must pass through many tribulations; but we believe that at the close of the day love will conquer evil, light will conquer darkness, and the Heavenly Kingdom of Christ will universally prevail!

Chinese Christian Independence and Western Christian Co-operation

Opening Address of the National Christian Conference.

C. Y. CHENG

WHAT do we consider the real object of this Conference to be? What do we hope it will accomplish? In what attitude of mind have we come? Are we prepared to open our hearts to each other with absolute frankness? Are we willing to sacrifice, if need be, our ideas, plans, methods, points of view and personal advantage for the best interests of God's Kingdom? Are we prepared to move forward in a spirit of progress which may startle our former habits of thought and our old ways of doing things? Are we willing and ready to follow the guiding hand of the Spirit of God wherever He may lead and whatever may be the cost? Do we in short really mean business? These are questions that arise and press for definite answer.

We have assembled here for a very serious purpose and under very critical circumstances. We are here to review the past work of the Christian Movement in this land and to find out how much—nay it may be more correct to say how little—has actually been accomplished. We are here to try to concentrate our attention on the future development of the Chinese Church and on the adjustment of its work to that of the missions. We are here to face squarely the present situation both within and without the Church in all sincerity and with Christian courage. We are here to study the Christian movement as a whole and not primarily as regards its details. The Christian Church is face to face with a challenge which must be met with deep seriousness and humility. We think, therefore, that the gathering of so large a number of representatives of the churches and missions and other Christian organizations at the present juncture is both opportune and likely to prove epoch-making.

We do not wish to overestimate the value of conferences, of which there have been many in recent years. We clearly recognize that they are not all powerful, and have their distinct limitations. Very often they do not really touch the problems at issue, nor affect the actual conditions, but at a time like the present when the Chinese Church is growing restless and is seeking for an outlet for its convictions and aspirations, and when the better educated classes of the nation are taking their stand on the platform of science and challenging the Christian religion, it is high time for us who regard the business of God as the

one great thing in life to get together and to consider what have been our successes and our failures, wherein lies our strength and weakness, and upon what points fresh emphasis must be laid, and in what matters new adjustments are required.

In many respects the Conference is therefore significant and likely to prove epoch-making in the history of the Christian propaganda in China. Its timeliness, its representative character, its equal representation of Chinese and missionaries, its choice of "The Chinese Church" as the central theme of its discussion, all these indicate that it is likely to prove well worth the time and thought and money spent upon it. It is our ardent hope that as a result of these facts this Conference will mark the entrance by the Christian Church in China upon another stage of advance; that it will help the churches and the missions to see eye to eye, and to realize more clearly than ever before the different functions which each is to serve; that it will help all the Christian forces that are working in this country to come to a better understanding and to effect a closer co-operation in order to realize more speedily their common objective, namely, the evangelization of China.

As this is in a very true sense a Conference dealing mainly with the work of the Chinese Church, our attention is naturally turned to the consideration of that great subject. Notwithstanding the many failings and weaknesses of the Church, we Chinese Christians welcome with eagerness and great expectancy the opportunity of discussing with our missionary friends the future development of the Church which, we must frankly acknowledge, is still largely under foreign tutelage. While there are no outstanding facts pointing to any remarkable and rapid growth of the Church, there has been steady development and signs of life are not difficult to discover. The Church is becoming self-conscious and is eager to accept larger responsibilities. As signs of hopefulness we would call attention to the growing spirit of Christian stewardship, the growing desire to be of service, the development which is taking place in its ability to think for itself. These signs of new life in the Church must be thankfully recognized, and the spirit breathing in them be nurtured and encouraged, and in no wise hindered, checked or despised.

In all mission fields sooner or later there gradually emerges with the growth of the church the desire for self-reliance and self-expression. China is no exception in this matter. Circumstances in the past have led the Church in China to follow unconsciously the pathway of dependence upon the missions both for their material and spiritual requirements. As missionary work generally begins with the less educated classes of society this condition of things seems to be inevitable. No-one is therefore to be blamed for it, but when the Church has awakened to the fact that it is not leading a natural and healthy

life, the question of developing self-reliance becomes one of the most acute and burning problems. This is in reality a mark of growth.

The most serious aspect of this problem is not the dependence of the Chinese Church upon the liberality of Christians in other lands. Its dependence upon the thoughts, ideas, institutions and methods of work of others is an even more difficult problem. The Church has thus far taken too many things for granted in an unquestioning way, and has not developed sufficiently in independent thinking and in forming its own judgments. How can a Church hope to grow in strength and in wisdom under such circumstances? While Christianity is an Oriental religion it has come to China by way of Europe and America. This inevitably means that it has brought with it a distinctly Western colouring. This is not of itself necessarily a bad thing for there are many points of excellence in the West that are both desirable and helpful. It lays, however, upon the growing Christian Church in China the need of taking great care and of exercising true discrimination so that, while holding true to the essential spirit of Christianity, it may still be free to express that spirit in ways suitable to the people of this land. We cannot but regard as something less than the best the mere blind following of what others say or do; the wholesale acceptance of customs, traditions, forms, institutions and methods. Nay, we would go even further and say that to accept even the interpretations of religious truth without searching the original sources and thinking through their implications for oneself is something less than the best. Christianity in China is seriously handicapped at the present time by being regarded as a foreign religion. This handicap should be removed, and Christianity, which is a universal religion and is capable of adapting itself to the needs of every land in every age, should become naturalized in China.

We, therefore, welcome all well-directed efforts to help the Church to undertake heavier responsibilities, to meet the cost of its work, to manage its own affairs, to express Christian truth in its own terms, and to develop the sense of responsibility and ownership in regard to all matters ecclesiastical, administrative, evangelistic and financial. The Chinese Church must not rest satisfied with anything less than getting completely under the load. In doing so, however, she cannot guarantee that the work will be carried on in precisely the same manner, or by the use of the same methods as has been the case during the period of predominant foreign direction in the past.

These, we think, are the main objectives for which we have assembled. We are met here that we may thoughtfully and prayerfully consider them together during the coming days. We hope that after the conference is over as we turn homeward we shall carry with us a real sense of satisfaction and hopefulness as we each, in our respective spheres of labour, face the future task of the Church. Speaking frankly,

we Chinese Christians are not satisfied with the situation in the Church as it is to-day, and we long to see readjustments and improvements. Such dissatisfaction is, we make bold to say, not only right but is a healthy sign of growth, and is inspired by God Himself.

Let it be clearly understood that we have come here to propose no particular methods of procedure, or schemes of organization. We are seeking rather to interpret the needs of the present hour, so as to help us prepare to face the actual situation. In as much as the Chinese people have characteristics of their own, these questions must be approached from the Chinese point of view. Plans that have proved successful in other lands, as for instance in India or Japan, may not prove suitable for China. Even in China itself the country is so vast, the number of different missionary societies each with their several emphases is so numerous, the Church is in such different stages of development, and advancing at such different rates of progress, that no sweeping generalizations can safely be made, which will meet the needs of all parts of the country, and of all the Christian Churches at the present time. Some of the churches have developed along self-supporting lines from almost the first day when the Church was founded, while others have as yet barely made a start. In some churches the direction of church affairs has already passed entirely into Chinese hands while in many others the missionary pastor still holds the reins of power, and determines the line on which the churches develop. In some sections the churches are doing their own independent thinking, while in many others it is still true that they merely accept what others plan for them. It is evident, therefore, that under such conditions no one particular plan or method can meet the needs of the case.

Nevertheless, we make bold to affirm that it is the right principle, and one applicable to the whole Christian body, to expect the Church to develop along lines that will make it independent of foreign control, and free from the stigma of being a foreign institution. We feel confident that we are all in substantial agreement in regard to this point. We are arguing merely for the natural development of the Church and have no plan which we desire to impose upon the different churches throughout China.

But let us go one step further. What is needed to-day is not so much a statement, or a restatement of the ideal just mentioned, but rather the realizing of that ideal. For many years missionaries as well as others have been committed to the position that it is right that the Christian Church should become naturalized in every country in which it is found. The difficulty is that while there has been agreement in theory, too little has been actually done to put it into operation. That is the real trouble. We do not want to build a church that is foreign, but we must admit that there is still little or no sign that the Christian

Church in China is becoming Chinese. For years we have freely admitted that it is the development of the Church and not the mission that should be the central object of missionary endeavour; but as yet there is little evidence that this goal has been reached. What is needed, therefore, we repeat is not so much to restate the ideal, but frankly to face the question as to how that ideal can be realized in actual practice. We would solemnly declare it as our mature judgment that the success of the work of every mission should be judged in the final analysis by the degree in which it has succeeded in putting that ideal into actual practice.

We will go further and state that this problem cannot be solved by adopting resolutions at conference or committee meetings, nor by placing in isolated cases some Chinese of ability in responsible positions. Our chief concern is with the question as to the attitude taken by the missionary societies and the churches throughout China on this subject and with their general practice.

A word of warning needs to be given here. It is inevitable that during this stage of development difficulties will arise and that there will be disappointments and even disasters. Misjudgment of intentions, misinterpretation of motives, unbalanced statements, unkind criticisms, misuse of public funds, mismanagement of church affairs, unsympathetic attitude towards others, uncharitable remarks—these and other things will surely occur occasionally here and there in different parts of the country. Nevertheless, notwithstanding all these inevitable difficulties that will surely try one's patience and faith, we frankly say that we should prefer to see the young man whom the Lord loved stumble along in the grave clothes in which he was wrapped than to see him lying motionless and lifeless in the cold grave. Let the Commanding Voice ring to-day in our ears as of old saying, "Loose him and let him go!"

In the last analysis the possibility of success depends upon the attitude of individuals toward one another. Success may crown a comparatively poor plan if the one who seeks to put it into operation is a man of the right kind. On the other hand failure will not infrequently result from excellent plans if handled by wrong persons. The solution therefore, of bringing about the necessary readjustments between church and mission depends not so much upon the particular plan as it does upon the personality of those who are responsible for putting it into operation. Success will crown the endeavour if missionaries, both men and women, are prepared to work to make the mission dispensable in China, and to lose themselves gladly in the great cause. Happily we have such men and women in this country among our missionary friends, those who are always willing and ready to serve the Church as its "helpers," and are putting into practice the words of John the Baptist "He must increase but I must decrease," words to which all readily

assent but which are difficult to put into practice. Such friends, however limited in number, are a constant inspiration to the Chinese Church and the source of true encouragement.

But the attainment of this great object is not dependent merely upon the attitude of our missionary friends. We Chinese Christians have at least an equally important part to play in the attainment of this goal, it is equally our duty and responsibility. Let us, therefore, solemnly ask ourselves, "How much do we make of the Church of Christ, how truly do we love to serve it, are we willing to stand by it through thick and thin, do we really and truly regard it as our own?" Our service for the Church is measured by our love for it. Let us remind ourselves, therefore, that it is easy enough to arouse a passing enthusiasm about the Church at a Conference, but quite a different thing gradually to put ourselves under the burden, and to develop it along the lines that will be at once fully in keeping with the spirit of God, and at the same time in line with all that is good, true and beautiful in our nation.

To undertake this gigantic task we need therefore educated and trained leaders and many of them. Again the Church is already in our midst. It is ours if we are willing and ready to make it ours. No one can really block the way. We need the call to-day. The call to-day is for men with an independent, aggressive and daring spirit, baptized in the love of God, who will voice our aspirations regarding the development of the Christian Church in China, and will march forward with true humility and great boldness and perseverance relying upon the guiding hand of the Head of the Church, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Fellow-believers in Christ! in the face of our spiritual, intellectual and economic limitations are we prepared to take up so great a responsibility, and to risk all for the sake of our Lord and His Church? May God help us in the attempt!

Let no one think that by the foregoing remarks we even suggest for a moment the preaching of a new Gospel, or the presentation of a Christ different from Him revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. "The foundation," so said St. Paul, "is already laid and no man can lay another." The Church of Christ in China is a part of the Church Universal. It is being built upon the foundation of Christ and on Him alone. Truth knows no change, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever." The whole world needs Christ as much to-day as men of old, and China is no exception. We wish to take this opportunity to emphasize once more the urgent need at the present time that God will lay hold of men empowered by His spirit to proclaim the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ to the people of our land who are consciously or otherwise seeking for the light, life and health which can only be supplied by Him who is "the Way, the Truth and the Life." May it please God that we who are gathered together here

may all receive, during the time of our waiting together, a double portion of His spirit so that He may send us forth with burning hearts to win men to allegiance to our Master.

We most earnestly hope that nothing which has been said will lead any to go away with the idea that we are looking for the retirement of our missionary friends, who are working in our midst nor that we feel that new missionary workers are no longer needed in China. This is far from our intention. The work of Christ in China has merely been begun even though 115 years have passed since the arrival of the first Protestant missionary. The presence of the missionary is not only desirable but necessary. The work demands our united efforts if China is to be evangelized. What we do, desire to see, however, is that the quality of the missionaries who intend to come to China should be very carefully considered by the responsible representatives of the churches in other lands. Especially is it important to find out what their attitude and spirit is toward the Chinese people.

While we are eager to see the Chinese Church bear its own responsibility, and to become free from the overshadowing influence of the mission, we do not wish to see the church in China develop in the Church a spirit of "China for the Chinese." As we believe that this is not in harmony with the universal character of the Christian Church, nor with the spirit of Christ. We believe that the noble Chinese saying: "The whole world is one family and China is a member thereof," applies in the truest sense to the spirit of the Christian religion.

As we face the future development of the Church in China, we are convinced that the task is one that demands the whole-hearted co-operation of Chinese Christian and Christian missionary. They must work shoulder to shoulder. Their united efforts are essential. We must never entertain the idea that the Chinese Christians are fighting against the foreign missionaries, nor that we Chinese Christians are seeking more power on the one hand, and our missionary friends are trying to withhold it. We might as well not enter into the discussions of this Conference if such a feeling were in existence amongst us. We are met here not in some political game, nor to carry through some kind of international diplomacy. We are here as Chinese and missionaries to work together for the best interests of the Kingdom of God in China. We are fighting together against the force of conditions round about us and not against one another. No missionary has ever come to China for the direct purpose of planting Western methods and traditions, or with the intention of bossing the young church. We also believe that it is not in keeping with the moral sense of the Chinese people to depend upon others to pay their bills and run their affairs. Since it is, therefore, without any ill intention on the part of either the Church or the mission that the present far from ideal situation has been developed,

we must work together unitedly to effect a radical and real change. When, therefore, we plead for a far larger degree of initiative and Chinese responsibility in the work of the Church, we are not asking our missionary friends to withdraw their sympathy, their friendship, their advice or their co-operation. Indeed we shall need even more than before all such help, as the young and inexperienced church of Christ enters upon its task as a part of the great Church Universal. Independence wisely directed is necessary and desirable for the Chinese Church, but the ideal is, we believe, not so much independence as co-operation. Looked at from any point of view this is by far the most important factor not only in meeting the needs of the Church to-day, but in meeting the needs of the whole world as well. We must increasingly learn to work together and to "dwell together in unity." It is our hope that before this Conference ends we shall all of us learn to place a far higher value even than in the past upon the importance of working together for the accomplishment of the great task that has been entrusted to us. We are indeed a cosmopolitan body who are met here representing many interests, denominations and points of view; but the tie that binds us together is stronger than any of these diverging interests, even the love of the Almighty God.

The measure of the blessing we shall receive from this Conference, whether it shall be great or small, depends upon the spirit in which, and the attitude with which, we have come. We shall be dealing in this Conference in the final analysis not so much with matters of a material as of a spiritual nature, and these must be dealt with by men who are kept in the love of God.

Brethren in Christ! We are entering upon a new day, we are facing a new task, greater responsibilities are being placed on our shoulders, let us quietly before God realize the seriousness of what this all means. Surely these facts should drive us into the very presence of God Himself, the Source of all wisdom and power.

May the spirit of humility, of trustfulness, and of penitence possess each and all of us as we try on this and the following days to face together in the presence of God some of these problems of the Chinese Church, and of the Christian Movement in China as a whole which are by no means easy of solution. Remembering always that "WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!"

The Church of Christ in China

MR. R. K. EVANS

(Conference Address)

MR. Chairman, Reverend Fathers in God, Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus: I count it no small privilege and no light responsibility to share with my honored chief and dear friend, Dr. Lew, the duty of addressing a gathering, that will prove so historic as this, upon a subject of such supreme importance as the Christian Church in China. It cannot have been without some misgiving that the Committee responsible for the program laid upon two men so inexperienced so great a responsibility. At least so far as one speaker is concerned that misgiving must long since have vanished. No one could listen to Dr. Lew's words on this subject without recognizing that there was in them, to use a phrase of his own, "something of what the Spirit is saying to the church and through the church to us." To me there falls the less important duty of asking my colleagues, the foreign missionaries here, to consider what is to be our response and attitude to that message and to the facts which that message reveals.

Before I ask you to consider what is to be our attitude and relation to the Chinese Christian Church, I want to ask you to think with me for a minute how we ought to regard China *as a nation*. In God's mysterious providence and in the order of human history, the Nation existed before the Church. If there is one thing certain about God Almighty, it is that He never contradicts Himself. And insofar as God made a great and good thing when He made a Nation, He is not going to erase and destroy that for the greater and more spiritual creation of the Church. And so, if we, whether Chinese or foreign, are to think rightly and truly of the present and the future of the Chinese Christian Church, we must start by thinking rightly and truly of the Chinese race and people. That at any time would be important—now in this hour of history it is vital. We are witnessing to-day one of the supreme miracles of human history. One of the oldest nations in the world is being born again. A nation that has been held for centuries under the spell of the world's most impressive classical tradition,—that has been cheated of its youth for a thousand years and more, is to-day recapturing its youth. And it remains to be seen whether it will, in its youth, drink the "Cup of devils" or whether it will receive from the Hand of the Christian Church the "chalice of the grapes of God."

In the Continent of Asia, China has been in the past incomparably the greatest and stablest empire. It may be that in the future, in the providence of God, it may be, not only of Asia but of the whole world, the greatest republic.

And yet in what I have to say subsequently as to our attitude as missionaries to a Chinese national church, I would like to make it clear that I am trying to base what I say not on *expediency*, but on *principle*,—not on the political wisdom of adapting our policy to the rising tide of Chinese nationalism, but upon the fundamental principles, both spiritual and ecclesiastical, which so far as I understand the New Testament, from the charter of the Christian Church.

And now I come to my specific subject,—The Chinese Christian Church and Our Attitude as Foreign missionaries Toward it.

Until very recently it was customary in the West to refer to the Christian Churches in China and other Asiatic countries as the "Native Churches," until some one with a little more insight and perhaps courtesy than most of us, discovered that such a title was highly distasteful to the members of those churches. Then for some time we were accustomed to use the term "The Infant Church." I wish to suggest that this, too, may prove a misnomer. I am inclined to think that the Chinese Church, properly so-called, is only now come or coming to the birth. It has been so far, a *foreign church in China*. By this I do not only mean that it has been a foreign church in the eyes of the Chinese. That is beyond all question, and I would refer all, who doubt that fact, to a paper by Dr. T. T. Lew, published in the May, 1922 issue of "The Chinese Recorder," under the title "Making the Church Indigenous in China."

... "The relationship which I have been privileged to enjoy with Chinese friends, both Christian and non-Christian, during recent months has revealed to me in a startling manner the depth and strength of this feeling, that Christianity is still in the main a foreign religion. But surely not only in Chinese eyes but in *actual fact*, the Christian Church in China has hitherto been to all intents and purposes a foreign church."

A third term, which was introduced and used at the Edinburgh Conference in 1910, was "The Church on the Mission Field." I would suggest that even that title is now, if not obsolete, at least obsolescent, and that we can no longer regard the church here in China as though it were a kind of appendage to the Church in the West. We may think of China as a mission field of the whole Church of Christ, in the sense in which the whole world is the field of the Gospel, and it is *pre-eminently the mission field of the Chinese Church or Churches*; but we ought to consider seriously how far we may legitimately go on thinking of China as a Mission Field, where Western Christianity has absolute right of way. Insofar as the Church of the Living God is already here in China, insofar as the Chinese Christian Church is becoming a reality, just insofar our right and privilege as missions or as individual missionaries is simply that of helping the Church of China to spread the Gospel and the church in its own mission field.

This statement raises two questions:—

1.—The ecclesiastical status of foreign missions in China.

2.—The position of the individual missionary.

(1) I would humbly suggest that, insofar as the Chinese Church is concerned the missions have no ecclesiastical status whatever, except by the courtesy of that Church; and I think that the time has come, or is soon coming, when it must be clearly recognized that, insofar as the churches of Europe and America continue operations here in China, it ought to be only by the consent, and at the invitation, of the Chinese Church. *A Church or the Church*, is the only authoritative and constitutive organization known to Christianity. Where a church exists, a body of believing men and women with Christ as their living Head, that body is a sovereign body. It may claim, and it must claim, spiritual sovereignty and ecclesiastical autonomy.

What then is the position and function of the foreign missionary organization? Ought we not to regard it as simply the medium, the channel and representative, of the love and faith of the Christian Church in America or Europe to the Church of Christ in China? We have no separate ecclesiastical position save that of a temporary intermediary between the churches of the west and the church of China.

In Dr. Harnack's "Expansion of Christianity in the first three centuries," Vol. I. Book II. there is a chapter entitled 'The Gospel of Love and Charity' in which he records several touching instances of the way in which churches in different parts of the then Christian world ministered to each other in various ways.

That is the way I should like to see the Church or Churches of the West related to the Church in China. The missions come on a Christian embassy, bringing their gifts, and presenting them as tokens of love to the Church of God in China.

May I take one illustration? We sometimes hear people speaking, as though there would be something positively wrong in a Church or the mission which represents it, contributing funds for building a church for Chinese Christians. I agree that there may sometimes be a danger in offering material gifts when they are not accompanied by their spiritual counterpart,—when, i.e., they are not sacramental. But surely if a church in New York or London, or Paris or Berlin, or Tokyo, should decide to express its love for the church in Peking by building or helping to build a noble Christian sanctuary, such a procedure would be entirely in harmony with the Christian spirit.

(2) *The Position of the Individual Missionary.* It seems to me that there are two and only two possible positions:—

a. The Missionary may regard himself as a member of the Church in Europe or America, who is loaned for Christian Service in China.

- b. The Missionary may regard himself as a member of the Chinese Church on exactly the same spiritual and ecclesiastical basis as Chinese Christians, and on no other.

The spirit of Christian fellowship seems to declare emphatically in favour of the latter course.

As I look back upon my earlier missionary experience I see more clearly now, even than I did then, that I was placed in a relation to a gathered group of Chinese fellow Christians to which I had no right or title. I found myself appointed as pastor over a church which had not been consulted as to whether it desired me to minister to it in that relation or not. And the memories of my earlier years, which fill me with the deepest shame and humiliation, are the memories of times when I exercised disciplinary powers to which I had no right. This point,—that of the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline by a foreign missionary *with or without* the consultation of the local church, is one on which Chinese feeling has been cut to the quick, and is to-day raw and inflamed.

It was quite a different matter with those missionaries who in the early days first gathered the church together. The earliest converts were their own spiritual children. But to-day we, who come to China as missionaries, come to find a church that is already gathered, and many of us find ourselves placed not only in a difficult, but in a false, position in relation to the church. Surely, our only right position is that of members of the body of Christ in China. Any ministry we may exercise and any authority we may wield should be drawn, and can only be drawn, from that Christian Church in China of which we are, or ought to be, members. It is to the whole body of the church that Christ committed His authority, and we, who come from the West to serve His church and gospel here, must recognize that we are men and women under authority and that our only right is to serve.

I should like to consider also the consequences of these considerations when they are applied to the matter of mission property and buildings and material resources in general. I think we ought to remind ourselves that as missions we have no inalienable vested right in the property and plant out here. We can, it is true, take the position of trustees and there is much to be said for such a position. I have known too many noble and faithful men, who have felt this sacred obligation to those who committed sacrificial gifts to their keeping and use, to speak disparagingly of such a conception of a mission's duty in this matter. But if the idea of trusteeship could gradually be merged in that of *joint stewardship* (see Dr. Lew's paper referred to above), it would conduce much to happier relations all round.

But, I repeat, we have no vested right as missionaries in the funds or buildings, which are really given through us, as medium, to the

Christian people of China. These things should be regarded now as coming direct from the churches in the West to the church here. There is, I admit, a distinction between the church or churches on the one hand and medical and educational institutions on the other. There is a principle involved in the former case which is not involved in the two latter. A foreign Mission may claim a right in the latter which it cannot claim in the former. But even in the latter the Chinese Church must obviously be more and more fully consulted and come more and more to have the decisive voice. Indeed the Chinese Church will only come fully to its own and only completely express its own life, when hospitals and other forms of social and philanthropic service, and when schools and colleges and other ways of serving the common life of the nation, become part and parcel of its corporate Christian life and work.

In considering our relation as missionaries to the ultimate object of our work, I think it right to weigh seriously the relative proportion of Western missionaries and Chinese leaders.

We have in China at present a force, I am told, of over 6,000 missionaries. It is true that in one respect they are all too few for the task. In another respect this enormous force of missionaries, holding in their hands such a preponderating control of the material resources of the Christian movement, seems to me to constitute a grave and subtle danger to Chinese Christianity and the Chinese Church. If our material preponderance were matched by a spiritual preponderance, there would be little to fear. No one need fear spiritual preponderance. Faith begets faith. Love evokes love. The fruits of the spirit are always scattering their seed into the good soil of the Garden of God. It is the material and numerical preponderance that is so dangerous. In money, in buildings, in all outward equipment the missionary force has an overwhelming weight to throw into the scales. Would it seem strange if I suggested that in the things of the spirit—in humility, in sympathy, in patience and in love—we are often found to be poorer than our Chinese fellow Christians?

Denominationalism. Among the seven-minute speeches made at the Edinburgh Conference, perhaps the most historical of all was that made by Dr. C. Y. Cheng on the subject of Western Denominationalism in China. What Dr. Cheng said then is re-echoed with ten-fold force over the whole of China to-day; and to anyone who has ears to hear the volume of sound rises to a noise like the thunder of the sea. The feeling is deep, widespread, unanimous. It is not too much to say that many Chinese regard our denominationalism as a curse, and the absurdity of its consequences has been referred to by Dr. Fosdick, in one of the sermons preached by him in New York after a recent visit to China, where he records how he was asked by a missionary in South China what one could make of an American-Dutch-Reformed-Chinese Christian.

In view of the strength and depth *and the rightness* of this body of Chinese feeling and opinion, it seems to me that we are faced to-day with a most solemn alternative. Either we must leave the Chinese free to use, to modify, or to reject our Western denominational divisions or else be ready to see the Christian Church in China split into a Chinese and a foreign section. I would ask you to consider two important and significant examples in the field of the church history of to-day. If we turn to Japan we find there two churches, or groups of churches, one Japanese and one foreign, existing side by side with no vital or organized connection. If we turn to South India, on the other hand, we find the most promising and the furthest developed attempt to bind together the broken body of Christ. As regards China, the Sectional and National Conferences of 1913, under the guidance of what seemed the ablest and wisest Christian statesmanship of the time, declared emphatically for the policy of developing nation-wide homogeneous denominational churches.

In the light of the instances I have quoted and of the critical situation in China to-day, I suggest most earnestly that the time has come to revise that policy and to ask whether the grouping of Christians and of churches in a locality, in a district, in a province, may not have the way more naturally and more effectively to the real unity of the Chinese Christian Church. The judgment both of Chinese and of foreigners will probably differ as to the relative importance of national and denominational interests in relation to the future of Christianity in China. For my own part, I do not hesitate to say that, with all its obvious dangers, a strong emphasis upon nationality is vital to the Christian future of China, while a strong emphasis upon denomination-ism, great as may seem its practical advantages, is one of the gravest and subtlest perils to the cause of Christ in this land.

Chinese Leadership. Chinese Christian leaders are to-day, so I am assured by competent Chinese opinion, all too few. I want to suggest that this paucity is very largely our fault as missionaries. There have been amongst us great and notable exceptions, for which we cannot be too thankful. But most of us, if we take ourselves to task, would have to admit that we have not been quick to discern and humble to recognize and follow such leaders when they appear, and that there is too much justification for the common, though politely veiled, opinion amongst the Chinese that the foreigners do not really welcome Chinese leaders. The foreign frown has lost many a leader whom the rank and file of Chinese Christians would otherwise have followed gladly.

In conclusion I wish to use three metaphors or parables which may help us to see the right attitude and relation which we, as foreign Christians, should adopt to the Chinese Church.

The two first come from Chinese sources. I am told that one of the Chinese leaders of this Conference when asked for an opinion on a certain cognate matter, requested a brief delay before replying, and then he answered with this little parable of the child Princess and her nurse. The nurse is the capable and efficient foreign missionary force—but if she is true to her duty and her place, the nurse never forgets that the toddling Princess is *the daughter of a Royal house*.

The next simile I would use is still more in keeping with the social genius of China. I owe it to Dr. Lew.

In the China of the past the bride went to her husband's home, there to accept a place secondary to her husband's mother. But to-day, in modern Chinese homes, it is being increasingly recognized that the bride has her own place as the center of a new home. In another land than China one would hesitate to compare a missionary to a mother-in-law, but here, where it is one of the most honorable positions in the social fabric, we may be glad that our Chinese friends are sometimes willing to think of us in that light. But let us see to it that, when Chinese Christianity comes to take its place in the family of God and when the Chinese Church appears as the bride of Christ, we foreign missionaries do not stand in the way or usurp a place and power that does not belong to us.

May I use one other simile? I said earlier that, so far from speaking of the "Chinese Infant Church," it were perhaps truer to say that church is only now coming to the birth. And I would like to suggest as a text for this National Conference, a text which gathers into itself the hopes and longings and prayers of hundreds of earnest, faithful and self-denying missionaries of Christ in this land—a text which is found in one of the greatest prophecies of the Old Testament as it points forward to the supreme message of the new—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son was given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder."

May I in conclusion venture to suggest the spirit and principle which will be an unfailing guide to us in all our relations with our Chinese fellow Christians. It is this—the less we give, the less we shall keep. The more we give, the more we shall keep. The more fully we yield, the more will they give back to us. The missionaries who really hold sway amongst Chinese Christians to-day are those who have given themselves most freely and fully in love and trust to their Chinese brethren and sisters. The measure of our Christian surrender as foreign missionaries will be the exact measure of the Chinese desire for foreign co-operation. Mutuality is one of the surest laws of life. "Give and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again."

Aim and Function of the National Christian Council Viewed in the Light of Experience in Other Lands

J. H. OLDHAM

(Conference Address)

I

THE World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 appointed a Continuation Committee which has since become merged in the International Missionary Council on which all the leading mission boards in North America, Great Britain, the Continent of Europe, Australia and South Africa, as well as the national missionary organizations of Japan, China and India are represented. During the last twelve years we have honestly tried to face in thought the real difficulties of co-operation. We have learned a good many lessons. We have at least gained some experience in regard to what ought not to be done, and in regard to lines of action which lead nowhere and involve a sheer waste of valuable time and money, and others which, if pursued, can only lead to disaster. I am not one of those who think that missionary co-operation has an assured future. I believe that its real difficulties are only now beginning to be faced.

During the past winter I have been in India spending four months in almost continuous conference with Indian Christians and missionaries in regard to problems relating to the future of Christianity in that country. The Christian movement in India, Burma and Ceylon is organized in nine provincial councils of missions, as well as the National Missionary Council. I met in either two or three days conference eight out of nine of the provincial councils as well as with the National Missionary Council, and in addition to these twenty-four full days of conference I had numerous personal conversations with Indian Christians, missionaries and leaders of the national movement in India.

In these conferences we were engaged chiefly with the same question with which this Conference is concerned—the formation of a National Christian Council. The question there as here was beset with enormous difficulties. The Metropolitan of India, who is chairman of the National Missionary Council, writing of what took place at its last meeting, summed up the deepest impression left on the minds of all who were present when he said what was done was the result more of prayer than of argument. I believe that the same thing will be said of this Conference if any true and enduring result emerges from its deliberations.

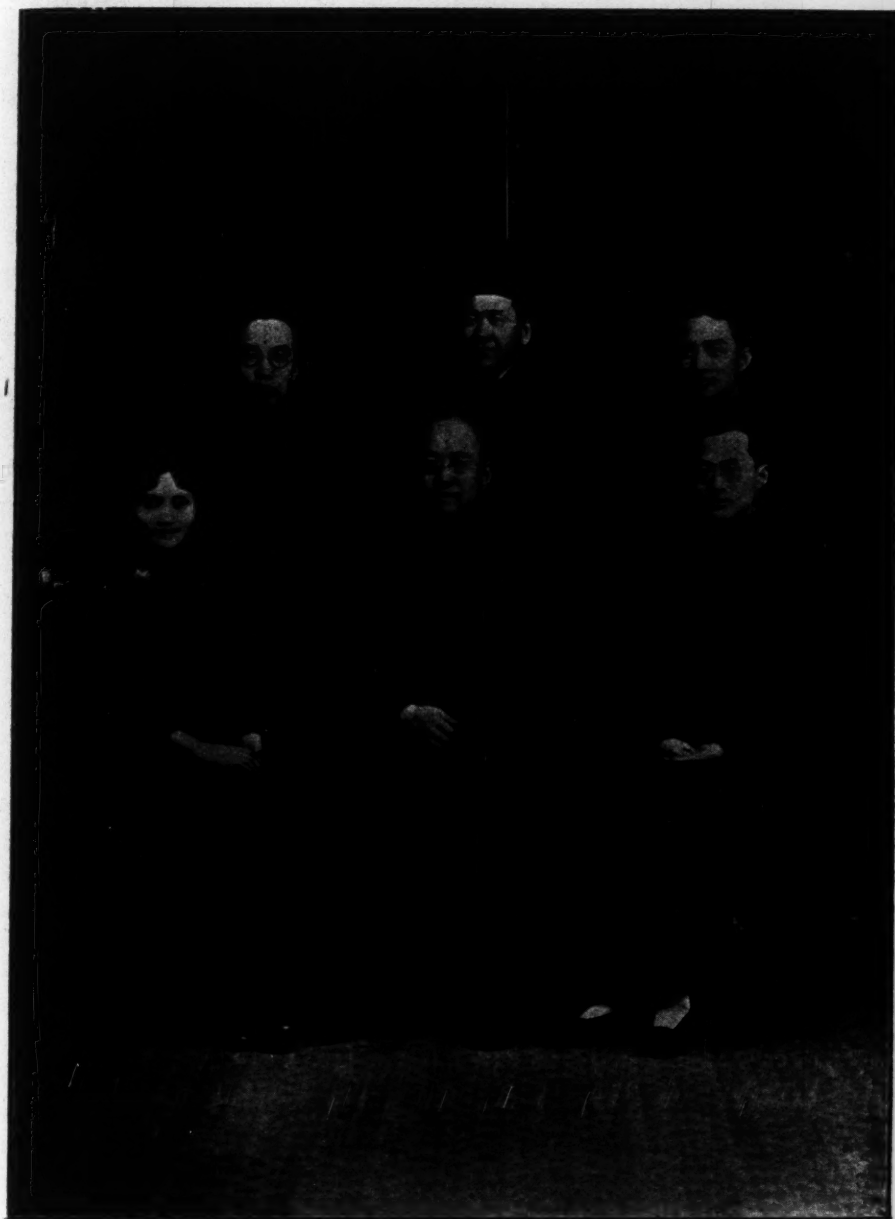
With this experience as a background, I shall try to shed what light I can on the problems you are facing here. And if in trying to put things briefly I seem at any point to be dogmatic you will understand that is the last thing I wish to be, and that while I believe, as I have said, that experience has taught some clear lessons, I speak as one whose mind asks for more questions in regard to this whole subject than it is able to supply answers.

II

The first thing to be said about the National Christian Council is that if it is to succeed it must be national, that is to say Chinese, in its genius, outlook and expression. On that point there is, I believe, universal agreement and it has already been strongly emphasized in this Conference. I wish only to state two reasons why anyone like myself who comes from outside China should refer to it at all.

The first is that the necessity for the Council, if it is to succeed, being Chinese in its genius and expression is as apparent from my angle as secretary of an international missionary organization as it is from yours in China, and it may perhaps be of some interest to you to look at it for a moment from that angle. I could hardly have remained in my present office unless I had some capacity for knowing what people in different countries really think—not what they are polite enough to say, but what they really think. Now I frequently receive warnings from my Scottish friends that I must be careful not to become imbued too much with American ideas or infected with American methods because they are not suited to Scotland, and I am equally aware that if a scheme has too pronounced a British flavour it is at a disadvantage in the United States. And I might add similar illustrations from the feelings of my friends on the Continent of Europe. So you will see that nothing cuts deeper into my personal experience during the last twelve years than this question of the expression of Christianity along national lines.

Now if you allow me to offer for your consideration the best answer which after a great deal of thinking I can find to the question, When does Christianity become truly national in its expression? I would say in a sentence, when the main direction and control of the Christian movement is in the hands of the people of the country—when they make the decisions. They may borrow what they like from other peoples, but in China, as in other countries, when the decisions are taken by Chinese the movement will be Chinese in its expression. So long as we foreigners take decisions we shall put a foreign stamp on it. We can't do anything else. When Chinese take the decisions they will put a Chinese stamp on it. They cannot do anything else.



COMMISSION III, NATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE.

T. T. LEW.

S. P. CHUAN.

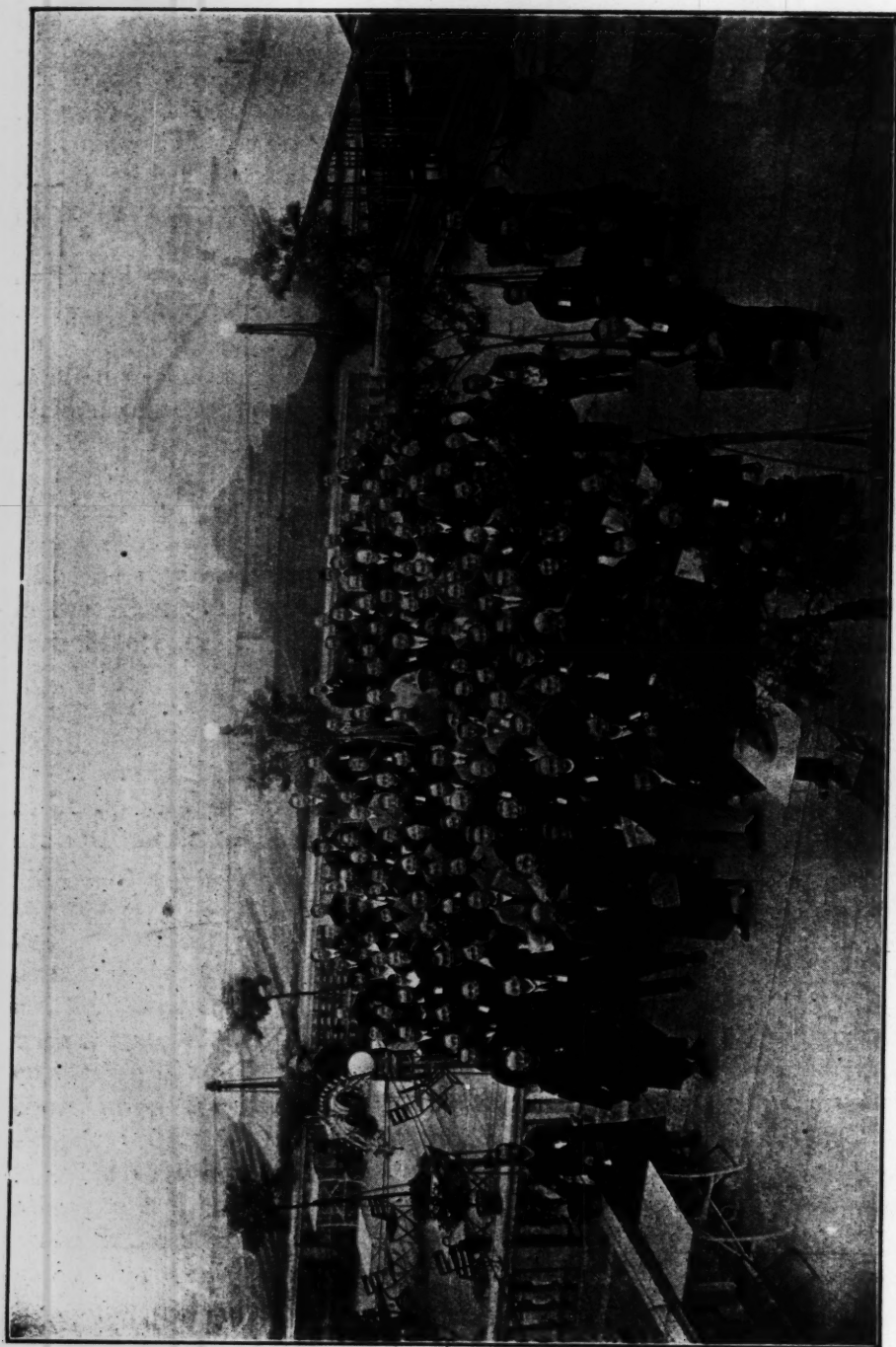
S. C. LEUNG.

Miss FAN YU-JUNG.

C. Y. CHENG.

T. C. CHAO.

C. Y. Cheng was Chairman of the Commission and of the National Christian Conference.



THE CHINESE HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.
Meeting of Members in attendance on National Christian Conference.

And if you will allow me to press the matter one stage further, it is necessary, if Christianity is to be national in expression, not only that the answers to questions should be given by Chinese but that the Chinese should themselves ask the questions. There is no phrase I think that I have heard more frequently since I reached China than the question whether through this Conference the Chinese are really going to get under the load. That question, it seems to me, makes an enormous and if I may venture to say so, unjustifiable assumption, namely, that our bundle of wares is a load the Chinese wish to carry. I am confident that it would not be possible for my friends in Scotland to carry out successfully a programme drawn up and handed to them by my friends in America, and I am nearly as sure that Americans as a whole would find it equally difficult to adopt and carry out a policy framed by the Scottish mind. And therefore I cannot believe that the Chinese are likely to be satisfied with or to work successfully something that foreigners largely create.

My reason for referring to these matters is that to my mind, notwithstanding the general assent to the principles, the formation at the present time of a National Christian Council which shall be truly Chinese in genius and expression, is in view of the preponderance of the foreign element in material resources at any rate, not by any means a simple, but a very difficult task.

One real problem is how to build up a national Christian movement which not merely on paper but in all its living activities will be in the main under Chinese direction and control.

Take the suggestion made this afternoon that all the members of the Council should be Chinese. Let me ask this question out of a dozen that might be asked. Will the National Christian Council when appointed interest itself, of course in co-operation with the Educational Association, in the policies of Christian education in China? I do not see how it can be a National Christian Council if it does not. But will a council composed exclusively of Chinese be able to do that effectively until Chinese have a larger share in the administration of Christian educational institutions than at present? If not, while the proposal may be the right thing to do, it will not carry us very far in the solution of our real problem because it does not deal with some of the essential factors in that problem.

My second reason for dwelling on this matter is that some of the Chinese brethren in this Conference may perhaps be saying to themselves, "We have realized in this Conference the sympathies of our missionary friends with our desire for an indigenous Christianity, but will the boards in the West allow them to take action in the direction they desire? Where do the home boards stand in this matter?" Well, I must frankly admit that many members of the home boards who have

never been to China do not realize the situation to which we are alive in this Conference. But I hold in my hand a minute of the meeting of the International Missionary Council held a few months ago, at which all the larger missionary societies of North America, Great Britain and the Continent of Europe were represented—except the German societies who we hope may be with us at the next meeting—and that very representative body, after more than two full days debate passed a minute which includes the following sentence:

"It has been brought home to the Council in an extended discussion that, notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made to carry out the aim of foreign missions, namely, the establishment of an indigenous church, the Christian movement in a large part of the mission field, and in particular in India and China, labours under a serious disadvantage because of the foreign character which it bears in the eyes of the people—a disadvantage which can be overcome only in the degree that the main leadership and direction of the Christian movement passes into native hands."

I think that minute should be an assurance that those at any rate who are responsible for the administration of the missionary societies in the West are beginning at least to appreciate the issues which have been before us in this Conference.

III

A second vital question on which the Conference will need to make up its mind is the character of the Council which it proposes to set up. Is it to be a body strictly advisory in character and taking executive action only when it has reason to believe that such action is desired by the churches and missions it represents? A good deal has been said already to-day on this subject, but it is of such fundamental importance that you will perhaps allow me to dwell on it for a little. The constitution of the International Missionary Council begins with a statement that it is established on the basis that the only bodies entitled to determine policy are the churches and missions, and the draft constitution for the National Missionary Council in India contains a similar provision. Now you are quite entitled to ask whether it is possible to do anything worth while under those limitations. Time allows me to say in answer to that question, having worked under those limitations now for twelve years, my experience is that you *can* get all sorts of important things done, and get them done in what I believe to be the best and highest way, namely, not by doing them for people, still less by telling them to do things, but by bringing about a common mind which makes people want to have the things done and do them themselves.

Several speakers to-day referred to this as the first Council of the Chinese Church. What do you mean by that? A church council may mean a body that exerts some kind of authority over the bodies that constitute it. Do you propose to set up a body of that kind?

I quite understand how to my Chinese friends the denominational divisions which have been introduced from the West are intolerable and I sympathize unreservedly with their desire to get rid of them. I only wish to ask you to consider with extreme care what means you are going to take to get rid of them. I perhaps can most easily make my meaning clear by a simple illustration. A razor is a good thing, and a saw is a good thing. But if you try to use a razor for sawing wood you will not make much progress, and you will destroy your razor. Now I hope the Chinese outfit is going to include both a razor and saw, but I suggest that unless you are quite clear which instrument you are using and for what purpose you are using it things will certainly go all wrong.

Leaving my illustration, what I mean is this. You have here in China, as a matter of actual fact, a larger number of churches and missions all of whom have authority to make decisions in their own sphere. Now you get some or all of those bodies to surrender part or the whole of the authority which they now exercise to some new central body, and that body will then be a Chinese Church Council in the full sense. But till they do agree to do that you must not trench on matters which fall within their sphere of authority without their full and deliberate assent. You must remain in the advisory sphere and know all the time that your sphere is advisory.

Now, as I have said, I hope that China may soon have a Church Council in the fuller sense. But that is something entirely different from an advisory body, and any attempt to confuse the two things, or to do through the one what can only be done through the other, means that you will miss your aim just as surely as if you try to saw wood with a razor. As I understand the Report of Commission V all that they propose is to create an advisory body, as the China Continuation Committee was, and the only difference is that the Chinese churches will have a larger say in the appointment of that body and that it will concern itself more in the future with questions which interest the Chinese churches as distinct from the problems of the missions. That is admittedly a limitation, but if you have a clear idea of what the instrument is that you are using and of what it can and what it cannot do, I believe that you can in a few years' make immense advances along these lines.

This section of my address was prepared some days ago, and in writing it I was not thinking at all of the theological issue which came up in this morning's discussion, but as you will have seen, the questions I have been discussing have an important bearing on that issue. The

question of the faith of the future Church in China is an issue of enormous importance, and the dangers which some here feel are real and serious dangers, but at present the authority to determine what things are essential to the true faith belongs to the different church bodies which are constituted in this country. Have those bodies transferred any part of their authority to this Conference? That seems to me the first question to be decided. I hesitate very much as one who comes from outside to intrude on discussions which are the proper concern of Chinese Christians, but you have asked me to address you, and one can only help others if he honestly speaks his whole mind. And therefore I cannot help saying that any attempt at this Conference to lay down conditions of orthodoxy, important and necessary as that is in its proper place, would seem to me to be a confusing of the two methods of which I have spoken, and that if this Conference were to attempt to do what the churches have not expressly given authority to do, very grave difficulties might arise and the things we desire hindered and not helped forward.

IV

My next two points are concerned with the question of what the National Christian Council is going to do. That is a question on which the people in India have done a lot of hard thinking in the last few months and they have reached fairly definite conclusions as to the results they want. Broadly speaking, they want to achieve two things.

In China you are further on, because you have had a more adequately staffed Continuation Committee, and in anything you may decide to do here you will be able to build on the excellent foundations which the Continuation Committee has laid.

The first I can perhaps best make clear by starting from a simple illustration. Imagine a small group of people who meet to find fresh light on some subject in which they are interested. There are two conditions of success for the common thinking of that group. The first is that each member of the group should make his own contribution. He must not withhold it out of deference to the opinions of others, nor must he yield or compromise it until he is satisfied that the truth for which he stands has been taken up and included in some higher truth. That is the first condition.

The second is that every member of the group should be firmly convinced that the group as a whole can see further and better than he sees himself. He will therefore confidently expect to come away from the meeting of the group seeing things differently from what he saw when he came. The last thing that he will want will be to impose his ideas by the force of his will or the art of persuasion on the others. That, so far as he is concerned, would be not success but failure, for

he would remain the same man that he was before. He would have learned nothing, he would have gained nothing.

Now if these two conditions are fulfilled, if each member of the group makes his own independent contribution, and at the same time expects to find that contribution enriched and enlarged by the contribution of others, then in the meeting of the group something creative takes place, a new thing is born. The group, as a group, sees something which no single member of it had seen before. And what the group sees has become the common possession of each member. Each member at the beginning of the meeting said, "I think so and so." At the end of the meeting he says, "I think so and so." But what he now thinks, while it is entirely his own, is something larger and richer than what he thought before. His personality has grown. He is a bigger man. But now observe. The greater the variety among the members of the group, so long as they have a common aim and purpose, the greater will be the gain to each. If all the members of the group start by thinking very much alike, if their experiences have been very similar, what they are able to give to one another is comparatively little. If their experiences have been dissimilar, what they are able to contribute to one another is very much greater.

This simple illustration will perhaps bring home what the missionary societies in the West have gained through missionary co-operation, and the reason why they value it. I have watched the process. I have seen men grow under the influence of these international contacts. I have seen them coming into touch with men who have inherited different ecclesiastical traditions and different national traditions, and under that influence I have seen their outlook widen, their sympathies expand, and their capacity to do things increase.

There are two things I want to say about this doing things together and getting to know and understand one another in the doing of them. The first is that we are only at the beginning of discovering what it may mean to us. The members of the China Continuation Committee, as Bishop Roots told us two days ago, know something of what it is. But in China it seems to me that you need somehow to develop more of these international and interdenominational contacts in regional or provincial areas so that a larger number of Chinese and of missionaries can get the advantage of it. And even where this fellowship exists, we are not yet getting anything like full value out of it. It is a comparatively new thing, and we can, if we set ourselves to it, greatly improve the results. Those of you who are engaged in education know that there is all the difference in the world between maintaining a school or college, and maintaining a first-rate school or college. So there is all the difference in the world between reaping some fruits of co-operation and reaping the largest fruits which it can yield.

And the second point is this. In proportion as we succeed in obtaining what we are speaking of, the gain to the Christian movement here in China is immeasurable. What larger gain is possible than that the men and women engaged in this work should grow in stature, should, through the enrichment that comes from contact with other minds, have a larger vision, a deeper insight, a broader sympathy, and so be bigger men and women for the work they are called to do? We look askance at any large budget for this work. But provided we really do get the thing we are speaking of—and I admit this is a very necessary and important qualification—we have a spiritual gain that cannot be measured in terms of money.

V

The second large object which a body like the National Christian Council may achieve is that it makes it possible for the churches and missions to deal with those larger issues which are the vital concern of each but which, just because they are large, are beyond the power of each to deal with independently by itself. Please note carefully what we are speaking about. We are not speaking about questions which lie outside the direct interest of churches and missions and with which they may or may not concern themselves. We are talking of matters which vitally affect the life and work of the churches and missions but which are so big that they cannot deal with them alone. No one can doubt that there are such questions confronting the Christian movement to-day. I do not stay to enumerate them.

Have we made adequate provision for dealing with such questions? I should like to tell you the impression made on me by my study of the Christian movement in India and the little I have seen of the Christian movement in China. It is that in the conduct of the Christian movement we have plenty of tactics and very little strategy. I do not like much to have recourse to military metaphors. But as time is short I think I can most quickly convey my meaning by taking an analogy from the conduct of a military campaign. In military operations a clear distinction is drawn between tactics and strategy. Tactics have to do with a single part of the front or a single operation. Strategy with the campaign as a whole. The successful issue of a war, as we have all realized in late years, depends on strategy. In the conduct of the missionary enterprise it seems to me that, as I have said, there has been in the past plenty of tactics, but no strategy. That is inevitable so long as missionary work is carried on, as it is here in China, by some one hundred and thirty different organizations. Each mission is concerned, and rightly concerned, with its own field. It is nobody's business to look at the whole or to think about the relation of the different parts to the whole. The resulting loss is enormous, as it would be in war.

If I may put in a sentence what seems to me the most important single issue which this Conference has to face, and which the home boards have to face, it is whether you and they are content to go through the next few years, at a time when revolutionary changes are taking place in the conditions under which our work has to be done, without making definite and adequate provision for seeing that these larger questions are properly dealt with. I for one believe that if this is not done the cause of Christ will suffer irremediable loss.

If you are going to try to deal with a situation of that kind it is essential that the provision you make for dealing with it should be adequate. It is better to do nothing than to waste time and money on something that cannot possibly meet the requirements of the situation. No one is so foolish as to try to start a new college or university when he has not within sight resources sufficient for more than two teachers, though mistakes tending in that direction may perhaps have been made in the past. But because people have not yet taken time to think themselves into the real problems of co-operation, it is the kind of mistake into which they very readily fall when it comes to setting up bodies like the National Christian Council, which is proposed here in China.

Now I want to say quite frankly that in my judgment the getting of this strategic view of the whole is a very difficult thing. If it is a big and important thing you would expect it to be difficult. You may quite easily miss it. If you want to get it you must be quite sure what you want, and you must be quite determined about getting that thing.

In the first place you need not expect to get it unless you definitely lay this responsibility for helping to get it on the shoulders of certain people. That seems to me a self-evident proposition. You won't get a college by talking about it. You have to put men there to make that college. And you won't get this view of the whole by talking about it. You will get it only if the strength and devotion and time and brain of men and women are put into getting it.

Secondly—and here I am speaking of the things which I and my colleagues in the work of the International Missionary Council have been fighting against more than anything else, in order that we may be able to do the work which we believe we have been put into office to do—you will not get it if you allow the men and women who are set apart for this task to be entangled in the details of organization, or in the vast machinery of committees, or if a body like the proposed National Christian Council embarks on a wide range of practical activities. There are no doubt a large number of things that are waiting to be done in the mission field, and that nobody is doing. If because of the urgency of these tasks a body like the National Christian Council takes them in hand, it simply becomes a new missionary society, constituted for

specific neglected tasks. And because its energies are absorbed in these things it fails to do the thing for which it was constituted, which was not to add certain new activities to those which are already being carried on, but to vitalize the whole existing Christian movement by providing it with what it at present lacks, the view of the whole.

When I was in India I found a very natural and legitimate fear lest the establishment of a National Christian Council might mean the setting up of a super-Church or super-Mission body and that the men appointed as officers might usurp too much authority, and that they might go round to tell other people what they ought to do.

I do not believe that to be a real danger if we are in earnest about the advisory character of the body we set up. In the kind of co-operation we are talking about there is nothing whatever to hold people together unless they want to stay together, the whole movement of co-operation will simply break up if the constituent elements are repelled by the action of those who are leading it.

But there is a further and more important safeguard. If the officers appointed understand the true nature of the work intrusted to them, the last thing they will want to do will be to impose their ideas on other people. For there is no reason why their ideas should be better or truer than those of other people. And even if they were, to impose them would be, as we saw a few minutes ago in our illustration of the group, not success but failure. Choose men who will see that their business is not to carry out the plans that they want but the plans that you want, and that what they have been appointed to do is to make you want things not with that limited knowledge and limited self which is all you have so long as you are left in isolation, but with that larger knowledge and larger self which become possible for you when through the work of these officers you are able to take a wider view of the facts and to have your thought enriched by contact with other minds—choose men who clearly understand that that is their function, and there should be no cause for fear.

I used a few minutes ago the word strategy. But metaphors are very dangerous and the strategy we want is something very different from the strategy of an army. It is not something thought out in isolation and imposed by authority. We must have this view of the whole which is included in the term strategy. But what we are seeking is something essentially new. It is a view of the whole which is reached through the co-operation of many minds, of minds which are united in a common search for the truth that is richer than any one of them has yet apprehended, of minds which have a profound belief in fellowship, which in the noble words uttered yesterday by Dr. Timothy Lew "agree to differ"—and rejoice in their differences—"and are resolved to love."

VI

My last word will be very brief. If those are the things at which the National Christian Council aims, then to form it is to embark on a great spiritual adventure. It is an adventure that may fail. If it remains in the region of organization it will certainly fail. At the level of organization the thing is impossible. The difficulties are too great. The demands made on us too exacting. It demands from the churches and missions a high degree of open-mindedness, of patience, of tolerance, of statesmanship, of love of truth, of the spirit of fellowship. Are these things there? It requires in the men who have to lead the movement in exceptional degree breadth of view, width of sympathy, capacity for self-effacement, and ability to inspire general confidence. Can these be found in sufficient measure? Who can say? But while the issue of the adventure must remain uncertain, it is an adventure supremely worth making. The National Christian Council, if it makes this adventure, will have nothing to depend on except the love of truth and the strength of the spirit of fellowship. But, after all, is there anything better in the world to trust to? Our Lord Himself, in a supreme act of trust, made His whole cause depend on the capacity of men and women, notwithstanding all their frailty and blindness, to rise to these heights.

My last word then is this. The adventure can succeed only if it is made and carried through in the spirit of prayer and of complete dependence on God. I do not say this as a pious platitude. I say it because I am profoundly convinced that the adventure to which we are called is one which makes such high demands upon us that we can meet those demands only if we call to our aid that deeper insight and wisdom and those larger powers which are hidden in God, and which become available for us only as we seek them in prayer as a gift from Him.

My Impression of the National Christian Conference

FOR one who has had only the chance to know 'the prominent' and 'the fashionable' of the Christian community in the big ports, the National Conference afforded an unparalleled opportunity to meet and make acquaintance with the leaders of the Native Churches from the interior. I was much impressed with the strength and solidity of character of the bulk of these workers. One rarely finds in one assemblage so many honest, intelligent faces, combining the trustworthiness of the farmer with the serenity of the scholar. There is something extremely simple and noble about them that compels one to have confidence in them and to look up to them for help and guidance. I believe that many of the Chinese Christians did originally belong to the farmer class,

which is the best and most uncorrupt group in China. I was never so convinced as I am now as to the Wisdom of God in choosing this sort of men and women for the work of the Church. Out of the 400,000,000 Chinese He selected the simple and good to be His trustees. If it were man's work, surely the services of the cultured, the influential and the wealthy would likely be first enlisted.

One morning, owing to my delay in attending the Conference, I was forced to sit in the back gallery up above the hall. A vision was then thrust upon me of the breadth and the depth of Christian Service. There in the big hall below, sat over a thousand people, each of whose lives has been touching the lives of many others. While some attend to the needs of a few only, others have in their care the welfare of hundreds and thousands. It is safe to say that practically every one there at the Conference has, some time in his life, looked after the spiritual and moral well-being of some one else. This is a significant fact which one can not fully appreciate until he is aware of the utter selfishness and the self-centred activities of the people surrounding them.

Another memorable fact about the Conference is the opportunity and the generous attention shown to Chinese leadership. I was rather startled by the wonder and admiration exhibited by the missionaries on hearing a fine speech or seeing something worth mentioning on the part of the Chinese members. Is not this all the natural outcome of training and education? The missionary should, indeed, be heartily congratulated, for what he witnesses now is nothing but the result of his patient labours in the past. This generous and brotherly feeling toward the younger and less experienced Chinese leaders of the Church is highly commendable. But let me point out here that ability in planning, efficiency in working, speaking and writing, these qualities though rare as they are, are still easy to cultivate. It is on Christlike love and the self-sacrificing spirit that the Chinese Church should henceforth lay more emphasis.

Many events occurring in the Conference confirmed my previous observation that nearly every young woman leader in China has received some measure of Christian education, though that education is very scanty and the number of those women is small. Yet it is gratifying to realize that and it should serve as a stimulus for yet greater undertakings along that line of work. It is primarily important that Christianity should take a strong hold of the women of the nation, for by them homes are made and through them children are moulded.

I must not omit the general cry at the Conference for the building up of a Native Chinese Christian Church. It is true that unless the Church is made indigenous, Christianity will remain a foreign religion. But the mere handling over of business from one hand to another and the change of emphasis in policy can only make the Church indigenous in

a superficial way. The Chinese Christians may indeed feel that they have an organization of their own, but to the nation as a whole it will still be regarded as a foreign institution. In my opinion, this state of affairs can be remedied only when the Chinese Christians give proper recognition to the value of Chinese education, meaning chiefly the study of Chinese literature. China is a land of scholars; for centuries the best brains have bent all their energies upon literary achievements, which can not be all fruitless. Besides, literature and morality are two words inseparable in Chinese life: literature is the very breath of our civilization and morality, as represented through literature, is the backbone of our social structure. Jesus said that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. Certainly, the Chinese have also a heritage. Why do we not make more use of it?

Mrs. T. C. CHU.

It is difficult to analyze the impressions made upon one by so great a gathering as the National Christian Conference of China, for the moment one begins the attempt a multitude of scenes and facts present themselves and demand recognition. Among the many, however, there are a few which stand out very clearly. The first is that a Chinese Church is coming into being. This was seen clearly in the part that Chinese took in the preparation for the Conference and in the discussions and, of course, in the formation of the Council. Even more significant, however, was the spirit of unity throughout the gathering. There were, of course, conflicting opinions, but these were not as great as might have been expected from a body so diverse in nationality and ecclesiastical polity, and the fact that the delegates while continuing to hold such differing convictions, could work together in mutual trust was striking witness to the underlying unity of the Protestant forces in China. This unity is giving rise to a Christian body which for richness and variety is unparalleled in the history of Christ's followers. It is held together, not by the force of the state or ecclesiasticism, but by the spirit of nationalism and the sense of a common task and a common faith. To it have contributed many diverse racial groups and church organizations and there are to be found in it the most divergent elements of Protestant Christianity. And yet all are learning to work together in mutual affection and are realizing a spiritual unity which is without equal in the history of Protestantism. There is as yet, unfortunately, no evidence of even the beginning of any such unity of spirit between Protestants and the large body of Chinese Christians in communion with the Catholic Church or with the smaller body that has grown up around the mission of the Russian Church, but it is a noteworthy evidence of the power of the Christian Gospel that there

should be arising this unity among Protestants. The Chinese may yet point the way to a similar fellowship among Christians the world over. Certainly all of us should work and pray that this consciousness of being one body may be strengthened rather than weakened as the Church is longer in China.

The second impression was one of wonder at the amount of remarkably able leadership, both Chinese and foreign, which is to be found in the Church. We all wish that there were more of it, and its discovery and development is one of the great tasks of the Church. When one remembers, however, that the total membership of the bodies represented is considerably below 400,000, that, in other words, the Church would in the United States be ranked among the smaller denominations, the quality of leadership shown was striking. Knowing the way in which they are chosen, we ought to have expected it among missionaries, but it was surprising to find so much of it in a body as young as the Chinese Christian community. It is extremely doubtful, whether any Christian commission of similar size in the Occident and drawn from similar classes of the population could equal the Chinese delegates. As the Church grows older we may confidently look for even greater numbers of able leaders to come forward.

A third impression is of the masterly way in which the task of the Church was visualized. This was true not only of the commission which had that topic as its special charge, but of all the commissions. It is doubtful whether so complete a survey has ever been made in any land of the Church's achievements, present status, and problems. It was a masterly piece of work.

The third impression was, strictly speaking, not of the Conference itself but of its setting. The great modern city of Shanghai, the most metropolitan in appearance of any of the cities of the Far East, with its almost unequalled growth, its great business blocks, its factories, its temples of pleasure, and its teeming thousands, and yet with the agencies that minister to the spiritual and moral needs of men, schools, libraries, churches, yes, and even pagan temples, so little in evidence, is one of the most sobering sights to be found in any land. As one remembers that Shanghai is in part a prophecy of what China, particularly urban China, may be in the future, it becomes a challenge as great as the Church has ever faced. It was most dramatic that in this great city in which are to be found so many of the elements of the new China this Conference should be meeting. Perhaps none of us were conscious of all that was involved, but it seemed to some of us that the Conference was courageously and fearlessly facing the challenge. Certainly it is an appeal which will test to the utmost the faith, the patience, the courage, and the self-sacrifice of the infant Church. If the Church responds and refuses to be content with anything short of the realization of its

motto, "China for Christ," it will have a record such as the Christians in no other land have yet had.

KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE.

One of the first impressions, in order of time but not of importance, was the difficulty of launching a bilingual Conference on so large a scale and composed of such diverse elements. The confusion and misunderstandings which arose prior to the appointment of the Chairman not unnaturally occasioned some misgivings as to the course events would take during the succeeding days. The sense of relief which followed the unanimous call to the Chair of Dr. Cheng Ching-yi, and the precedence this gave to the Chinese personnel and the Chinese language, demonstrated in unmistakable fashion the legitimate and natural aspirations of the Chinese delegates for a Conference which was to give expression to their national spirit.

The packed hall was in itself a moving spectacle, especially when it was remembered that each Chinese delegate represented approximately one thousand of his fellow countrymen and that each missionary stood for twenty fellow workers. To one who had but recently returned from a fairly extensive tour inland, where the vast and almost overwhelming needs of China had been daily before his eyes and in his heart, such a Conference could not fail to be a stirring demonstration—though not intended as such—of what God had already wrought. To gaze upon the audience was vividly to realize the triumphs of the years gone by and to gain a new conception of the forces in the field. What would not Robert Morrison, Hudson Taylor and hundreds of others have given could they but have seen this day. Blessed were the eyes which saw what we saw; for many pioneers and toilers in the mission field have desired to see the things we saw and saw them not; and to hear things we heard and heard them not.

But not only were the magnitude of the assembly and its vast significance impressive; so also was the character of the personnel. God's greatest gift to any land or any cause is men and no one could have been present on this occasion without recognizing the fine qualities of leadership which God has already given to His church in China. The quiet dignity of the Chairman and the "meekness of wisdom" manifest in his words and conduct of the meetings, as also the high level of spirituality and consecrated ability revealed in the more important reports and speeches were cause for devout thanksgiving. Among so much that was excellent it is almost invidious to particularize; but we should fail to give our impressions if no special reference were made to the Chairman's Address, "The Message of the Church"—a document which exceeded one's highest expectations and cannot fail to bring

rejoicing and blessing to thousands in other lands than China—, to the heart-searching message on "The Christian's Personal Life," and the fearless convictions and lofty standards both of faith and practice which animated almost every line of "The Church of Christ in China." To say that one has been impressed by these things is to speak with studied restraint and intended moderation. They do not call for the praise of men but rather for thanksgiving to God.

Another lasting impression was the spirit of devotion both felt and manifest in the special times reserved for worship and waiting upon God. As the Conference opened with that praiseful hymn:—

"All hail the power of Jesu's name"

so throughout all the meetings and especially during the devotional periods Jesus Christ was uplifted and crowned with honour. In some ways the supreme moments of the Conference were connected with the devotional half hour on Friday which preceded the discussion on the proposed National Christian Council. All knew that we were approaching a subject fraught with difficulty and concerning which convictions might clash; but the strain and stress were taken from our souls and God's still voice of calm was heard as we sang, in the attitude of prayer, the two verses of Whittier's well-known hymn:—

"Drop Thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease,"

and:—

"Breathe through the heat of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm."

This prayer and the words of the speaker reminding us of God's infinite resources of love and wisdom, of the necessity for God Himself to do what was needed if our desires were to be realized, that despite all our differences, our unity in Christ was already an actual fact, were a fitting and invaluable preparation for the by-no-means easy discussion which was to follow.

If Friday marked the supreme moments of solemn expectation and preparation, Monday morning saw the consummation of our hopes. Friday had felt the hush of hearts subdued but Monday's meeting gave vent to the joy and satisfaction of hopes realized. The difficulties of finding a way whereby the Conference could renew its confession of faith in certain fundamentals without encroaching upon the prerogatives of the Church courts at home and so making the proposed National Christian Council not only an advisory body but also a Super-Church Council controlling doctrinal and ecclesiastical polity, had for a time appeared insuperable. But the Red Sea place in our lives was opened once more and the way of the Lord found through. It was a great moment and

the climax in the proceedings of the great assembly when, almost to a man, the Conference rose to its feet to carry by a rising vote its confession of faith in the three Persons of the Godhead and in the authority of the Scriptures. How otherwise could the sense of relief find vent but in singing, ere we sat, the Doxology?

Merely to mention, without comment, all one's impressions would go far beyond the limits allowed to this article; but we must not omit the singing, especially the singing in Chinese of Luther's great battle song. To hear the sound of about twelve hundred voices, nearly a thousand of them male, thus giving expression to their heartfelt confidence in God was an experience not easily to be forgotten. Again, while admitting that some things said were doctrinaire, for Shanghai and Peking do not represent conditions prevailing in hundreds of upcountry stations, the great outstanding fact remains that this occasion marked an epoch in the relationship of Missions and the Chinese Church. Without agreeing to call this the time of the birth of that Church, as some have said, we rather prefer to regard the Conference as the public celebration of its "coming of age," and of its passing from a condition of tutelage and minority to one of comparative independence and responsibility. As one listened to the many speakers each with his own point of view often tenaciously held, one marvelled that out of all this variety of opinion and conviction there should be so much of unanimity on the great essentials. Yet the very variety of convictions brought out in strong relief the fact that the balance of truth is generally to be found, as in nature, by the interplay of centrifugal and centripetal forces.

In conclusion, the Conference filled one with hope. It was John Keats, one of life's mournful ones, who said: "Do not diet your mind with grief, it destroys the constitution." At a time when the daily press is full of the world's sorrows, it is good to dwell upon the hopeful elements in such a gathering for it abounds with promises of good things to come. May it be, as one of the Chinese delegates from distant Yunnan prayed, that a double portion of the spirit of the missionary Elijahs may fall upon the Elishas of China as they endeavour to take up, as a consequence of this Conference, the mantle of their predecessors.

MARSHALL BROOMHALL.

Although at different critical stages of the deliberations one could not help being disappointed at many things that came up, one began to understand, when the Conference was viewed in its entirety, that these were but necessary shortcomings of the human interactions of a vast and heterogeneous body of missionaries, Chinese, men and women, and of opinions, judgments and preconceptions.

Such a variety of interests, opinions, and sects were represented in the Conference that one who is exceedingly willing to sacrifice denominational, local and formal differences and to learn to live and act in spiritual harmony with all the believers in God, was overpowered with a sense of utter helplessness in the presence of seemingly insurmountable difficulties. There were, to such a person, a terrible lack of nation-wide visions on the parts of the delegates; a pathetic ignorance of the purpose of the Conference and the nature of the proposed National Christian Council; a widespread suspicion of the motives that prompted the calling of the Conference together; an obstinate adhesion to denominationalism on the part of missionaries and their Chinese followers; a strong, insistent, and irrelevant demand for formal doctrinal statements in the constitution of the National Christian Council; and what was very distressing to optimistic and forward looking persons, a vast unpreparedness of the Chinese delegates to comprehend the deep significance of the Christian movement ahead of us in China.

Thick threatening clouds gathered over all. So charged were the delegates with electric readiness to fight against whatever was unsuitable to them that one did not dare touch the live wire of suspicion, distrust, spiritual disunion and keen apprehension. It seemed that some doctrinal statement must be inserted in the constitution of the proposed National Christian Council, in spite of the well known fact that none of the delegates was given power by the bodies they represented to set up authoritative theological formulæ over all believers in China. For the time being history was veiled in the mist of the doctrinal sea and the lesson of history was practically forgotten that comprehensive spiritual union never has in the evolution of the Christian religion been secured as a result of the unity of formal beliefs.

Then, in addition to the contention for doctrinal declarations which at best could not be more than another Occidental creed, there was the struggle, apparently strong, for "democracy" which was unhesitatingly expressed in the desire to have a fair representation of the denominations on the Council, to have all the members of the Council elected by the denominational groups, and to drop the principle of co-option and even of nomination by the first seventy-five representatives as chosen by the groups themselves. Democracy and fair representation, not very clearly understood by the Chinese delegates, seemed for the time being to be in danger of ecclesiasticism when this contention lasted; the National Christian Council seemed to be giving way to a national ecclesiastical council; the anticipated and earnestly desired Christian fellowship and unity seemed to be at the mercy of denominationalism; and the ideal of an indigenous church seemed to be lost sight of, except in speech, in the absence of even poetic dreams of the future when Christ would be enthroned in the heart of the Chinese nation and of the world.

But in a few days' time, the dark threatening clouds were gradually lifted and the light of God's countenance shone stronger and stronger upon the Conference. All the groups had leaders big enough to sink their narrow selves in the presence of God's spirit. The note of spiritual unity was sounded, suspicion began to appear as founded upon unsubstantial grounds, and the vision of the necessity, the nature, and the functions of the National Christian Council began to dawn upon the mind of the Conference. A general statement of our faith gave satisfaction to all as it struck the fundamental grounds of Christianity and at the same time left the liberty of conscience so dear to us all untouched. Soon the National Christian Council came into existence and the Conference rolled smoothly on, with a strong spiritual emphasis, toward its end. And one's heart keenly felt the pathos of the physical breaking up of the Conference when the declaration was made of its close. The Conference, indeed, ended; but the task it started or dreamed of must now rush on like a mighty stream which must begin in mountain top springs and small creeks and gather force as it goes on in the course of divinely guided events, toward the immense ocean of conquering love and complete fellowship, individual consecration and national salvation. Prayers are needed. Nothing will be accomplished save on our knees. Also there are needed sacrifices, support, effort, and co-operation on the part of all.

The heart leaps in thanksgiving to God also for the profound devotion, faith, and wisdom of the Conference leaders and of the business committee, whose perfect submission to the will of God made it possible for God's blessings to run through them to the entire Conference. The arrangements, the programs, the speeches, the reports, the well-thought-out resolutions, the discussions, and the constant changes in the business of the Conference together with the devotional exercises, though not beyond criticism, gave one an insight into the carefulness and willingness of those who had the business of the Conference in hand and taught one a lesson at a time when many-sidedness was particularly needed.

The greater task is yet ahead. With the formation of the National Christian Council which has no authority but that of love and no means but that of confidence, we must think soberly and clearly and realize at once that the success of the Council as well as the progress of the Kingdom depend upon our spiritual insight, nation-wide vision, unceasing prayer, undaunted faith, continued support, to back up this National Christian movement, and willingness to repose confidence in those on whom the greater portion of responsibility must rest. The National Christian Council has problems before it, none of the solutions as yet, and the necessity of immediate action to secure secretaries and funds. True and thoughtful Christians must think out the meaning of a possible failure in the light of their hopes for the future of Christianity and of

the Chinese nation. Nothing short of God's love and our own progressive spiritual regeneration will be of avail. Both success and failure will be due to our capacity of rising to the call of the time and this in turn depends upon a deepened spirituality and knowledge in ourselves. No Christian in China, missionary or Chinese, can be exempt from responsibilities. No Christian ought to entertain wild expectations and hope to receive more than he contributes. A great "spiritual adventure" has been launched and every Christian will be held accountable for its success or failure. It is a time of testing.

T. C. CHAO.

The Chinese Church Comes of Age

The China National Christian Conference

A CONFERENCE OF THE CHINESE CHURCH

WHO can fully describe life or lifting hope? The National Christian Conference which met May 2nd to 11th in the Town Hall, Shanghai, is a movement of life and hope, and therefore beyond description. We can only catch here and there a gleam of this deep movement, and this not always connectedly. In this Conference the hope of many toilers became sight only to unfold at once into a bigger hope; vision became reality to point to a larger vision. Mrs. J. N. Avanne of the Woman's Foreign Mission Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, said that two words describe this Conference "Hitherto" and "Henceforth." We met to see what God had wrought and realized in part the wider and deeper work He waits to do.

The Conference cannot be reported in detail. It was too full and too inclusive. It will take a decade to write in uplifted life its real meaning. Mr. F. S. Brockman in the closing address said it was "the first representative gathering of the Christian forces in China." He felt the keynote of the Conference to be spiritual unity and its purpose that of laying down plans to attain this in fuller measure. This spiritual unity, he said, "is the great apologetic and the great mark of discipleship." These arise out of a dominating loyalty to Christ coupled to a democratic temperament both moving forces in this Conference. This Conference was in all its work an exhibition of Christian democracy. The Devotional Services, which were conducted throughout by Dr. H. T. Hodgkin, did much, very much, to weld a meeting that started as a crowd with divergent aims into a group with convergent aims. In these Devotional

Services all participated. When praying together the sound was as "The voice of many waters." When singing, the Conference became a torrent of song or to quickly change the metaphor—the strong challenge of an army moving into position. At times feeling ran deep, as, for instance, when Dr. C. Y. Cheng was elected Chairman by acclamation, when common expression of unity of faith in Christ was achieved and when a National Christian Council was elected. Only once was there confusion, due to failure to understand promptly the rules of order which arose because of the limitations of time and language. Furthermore, it was throughout a gathering of the Chinese Church, not only in the central theme "The Chinese Church" but in the whole conduct of the Conference.

Dr. John R. Mott, Mr. F. S. Brockman and Rev. H. J. Oldham, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, rendered great service in public speeches and private counsel. They helped to link the Christian movement in China to the Christian movement in the world. In addition to the regular meetings, there were sectional meetings on two afternoons and several parallel meetings at which some of the topics were repeated for the benefit of the general public. There was very little of what might be called radical expression of opinion. The missionaries as a whole were fully in sympathy with the aims and aspirations of the Chinese leaders, and it was recognized on the part of the Chinese leaders that Western Christians still have a tremendous part to play in Christian work in China. Of missionaries Mr. T. Z. Koo said, "Some missionaries are more Chinese than the Chinese." The whole Conference was a presentation of humbling fact and stirring vision. One must mention also the dignity, poise and sanity of the Chinese leaders and speakers. This includes the women as well as the men. One would have thought that big conferences were for them everyday occurrences. The Chairman showed himself to be a master of assemblies.

PREPARATION FOR THE CONFERENCE

Two years of preparation were back of this Conference. The principal work was done by the Committee on Arrangements, under Bishop Graves as Chairman, and five Commissions. In the preparation of these Commission reports, which were adopted and passed on to the churches and missions, at least four hundred Chinese and Western Christians participated directly. The Conference was the culmination of months of special thinking and one hundred and fifteen years of Christian effort.

Commission I, with Bishop Roots as Chairman, dealt with "The State of the Church." This Commission outlined the growth and develop-

ment of the Church and its environment. Bishop Roots said that the progress of Christianity in China meets with no greater opposition to-day than it does in the West. The Christian Church is a part of the life of China and is gaining ground. Commission II outlined the "Task of the Church," under Rev. C. E. Patton as Chairman. It is evident that the Christian Church is beginning to attack all problems of life in China, the newer problem of industrial conditions also having a place. On the first night, Mr. M. T. Stauffer, editor of the "Survey," gave an illustrated lecture which vividly brought home the varied activities of the Christian Church and its attempts to meet the needs of all classes of society. It was revealed that about half the territory of China is still practically untouched by the Christian message. Here lies the great task of the Church in the future. Commission III gave "The Message of the Church," under Dr. C. Y. Cheng as Chairman. This Commission was composed entirely of Chinese. It emphasized the need to unite the Church, the primacy of the Church, and China's need of Christ in all her life. The first time the Christian Church in China gives a message to the Chinese people, it is the Chinese Christians who give it. Commission IV under Dr. David Yui as Chairman and Dr. R. Y. Lo as Associate Chairman, dealt with "The Leadership of the Chinese Church." This is seen to be inadequate to its task. To meet this were suggested the need of Chinese leaders realizing and receiving more responsibility and of getting above their present unsatisfactory economic condition. Through their report breathed a restrained determination to go forward in a leadership of service. Commission V under Rev. C. G. Sparham dealt with questions of "Organization and Co-operation." Their report revealed a definite and striking growth in co-operation. To this the China Continuation Committee as a co-ordinating factor has contributed in marked degree. Special appreciation of the work of Bishop Roots as Chairman and Dr. C. Y. Cheng and Rev. E. C. Lobenstine as Secretaries was shown. "Above all else," said Bishop Roots, "the China Continuation Committee has promoted fellowship and understanding." He furthermore said that it has considered the interests of the whole Christian movement in China rather than that of the denominations. Its activities have revealed the conviction that "There is no sufficient reason for the differences which divide us. We ought to be in closer fellowship with one another." This Committee has made particular contributions towards religious liberty, meeting the problem of the new culture, and the promotion of education and evangelistic work.

THE DELEGATES

The delegates were a host. The Chinese delegates numbered 565 and the foreign members resident in China numbered 488. In addition,

there were 136 foreign visitors and representatives of home Boards present, making a total of 1,189. The Conference represented about 130 different Christian organizations. Each Chinese represented about 1,000 Chinese Christians and each Chinese Christian represented about 1,000 of the Chinese people. Each missionary represented twenty missionaries. About twenty-five per cent of the Chinese delegates were women. About one-third of the women delegates were Chinese. The Conference was bilingual, owing to the difficulty of various dialects from which difficulty the Chinese even are not yet free. As a result it was, strictly speaking, only a five days' Conference. In the 1907 Conference there were no Chinese delegates. In the 1913 Conference one-third were Chinese. In this Conference the Chinese and Western delegates were about equal. As far as representatives from China are concerned, there were more Chinese than Western. The gavel of the Conference and the primacy of Christian leadership was definitely passed to the Chinese Church in the election of a Chinese Chairman. Of the three Vice-Presidents, one was Rev. T. K. Chung, another Dr. Harold Balme representing Great Britain and the third Dr. P. F. Price, representing America. From the beginning the Chinese delegates took their full share in discussion and conduct of the Conference. In fact, to one who has sat through other Conferences in the last twenty years the most striking element in this one was the new spirit in the Chinese delegates. It was their Conference.

OUTSTANDING TOPICS

Of the topics discussed only a few can be mentioned and these the outstanding ones. Under the head of "The Church of Christ in China" the problem of an indigenous Church was presented. Dr. T. T. Lew (see also article by Dr. Lew in April issue of *RECORDER*) was one of the speakers. He gave eight characteristics that the Chinese Church should have (1) A fearless fighter against sin; (2) A faithful interpreter of Jesus; (3) A flaming prophet of God; (4) An obedient disciple of the Holy Spirit; (5) A worthy teacher of the Bible; (6) A genuine servant to the Chinese people; (7) A believer in unity because she loves Christ; (8) A courageous experimenter in co-operation. He urged a genuine faith in the Bible as the Word of God, but also said, "Not the Bible alone but all the teaching of the Church, she shall gladly submit to any true and reverent scientific tests and trials." He said, too, very significantly, "She shall teach her members to agree to differ and resolve to love." Professor R. K. Evans, colleague with Dr. Lew in Peking University (Mr. Evan's article is reproduced *in extenso* in this issue) spoke on the attitude of Western Christians to the Chinese Church. He said that the missions have no ecclesiastical status except

that given them by the courtesy of the Chinese Church and that missionaries should be members of Churches in China on the same basis as the Chinese and on no other. One felt in this session that the missionaries have willingly abdicated rights which, while they have used them for the best possible ends, they have really had no title to. A few delegates, including several foreign delegates, felt that the National Christian Council should be composed entirely of Chinese which was not, however, and quite wisely, carried out.

The next significant utterance was "The Message of the Church." The first part of this was read by Dr. T. T. Lew, and we have reproduced as much as possible of it in this issue of the RECORDER. As Dr. C. Y. Cheng said, it was not intended to be a doctrinal statement, but a message for the times in China. It shows the desire of the Chinese Church for unity and for freedom in the study and interpretation of Christianity. In other words, it is an appeal for freedom of the Christian spirit. It makes the Bible central, and aims to use every reasonable means to make it understood. It recognizes the social obligations of the Christian Church. It is essentially a message of the spirit. It is a sign that the Christian Church in China has in a measure become indigenous, although still too foreign in control and method. It recognizes the importance of love, which is, as Mr. F. S. Brockman said, "Not so much a law as a creative force."

The real and practical issue of the Conference was Christian unity expressed in some form of co-operative organization. Rev. C. G. Sparham presented this report on which, like all the others, much time has been spent. The Commission tried to interpret the general mind of Christians in China on this subject, and the delegates tried to interpret the minds of their respective groups. No one was disposed to go farther than would receive the support of all concerned. It was felt that what was needed was not an ecclesiastical council but a co-operative organization to help the Churches carry on their common activities. The main interest of the Conference was in this problem of Christian unity. There was a surprising unanimity of desire coupled with a realization that much is yet to be done before the final form of such unity is discovered.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The principal question will be, "What did the Conference achieve?" We shall endeavour to indicate some of the achievements as they appeared to us.

There were few resolutions. Such resolutions as were passed looked to the future. There was a feeling that the Christian task in

China needs careful rethinking in the light of the facts now revealed. Still, the resolutions passed (of which we have reproduced the most important) are full of inspiration and vision and are tied up to definite plans.

In this Conference the Chinese Church was in a measure able to think in terms of a world-wide Christianity and nation wide needs. It realized in greater degree its own possibilities and responsibilities. It also achieved its place in the family of God. For Chinese and Western Christians are now more than ever members of one great family engaged in one great task for one Master. The uniting force of the spirit proved stronger than any disintegrating tendencies.

Again, without minimizing the backwardness of many Chinese Christians, this Conference revealed a live Church—a Church awakening. This was seen particularly in the opening address of Dr. C. Y. Cheng in which he outlined the object of the Conference (this address is reproduced *in extenso* in this issue) and in an address near the end of the Conference where he called earnestly for the support of the Chinese Church for the newly organized National Christian Council. The Chinese leadership saw its obligation to get more under the responsibility, and the rank and file was called on to see more clearly its obligation to be loyal. The Conference really saw a vision of the whole Church and the whole task.

Again, this Conference shows that the Christian forces have produced a comprehensive program. To read the reports of the five Commissions is to realize the present grasp of the thought of the Christian Church on its problems. This program might be spoken of in the words of Rev. Z. T. Kaung, as an attempt "to interpret the Chinese Church in national terms." The evangelistic program has outlined, to use the words of Dr. T. T. Lew, "A Church to meet the need of ninety-nine and a half per cent of the four hundred million Chinese still without the Christian fold." If the "Survey" has accomplished nothing else, it has pointed out most definitely those places in the land and life of China where the Christian message is most needed. And there is a feeling that the Chinese Church should definitely move forward in a program of evangelization along the lines of the Chinese Home Missionary Society and other similar societies. This program sets up goals of Christian activity which, even if only achieved in part, will establish precedents of Christian service for many decades. In them the Christian Church answers the challenge of the teeming life of China.

The educational program has been worked out by the Educational Commission, a report on which was made by Rev. E. W. Wallace. He said, "The chief immediate goal of the Christian educational forces should

be the development of a strong Christian community. In this purpose should be included the numerical increase of this Christian community. But more especially its development in health, intelligence, character and spiritual power. Professor Francis Wei of Boone University, Wuchang, said that the Church must uphold Christian principles in all walks of life, and further said, "It will be in the Christian university that the united Church will have its beginning." It was pointed out that there is a permanent place for Christian education alongside of Government education and that the Christian school is needed to emphasize the religious side something the Government school cannot do. In connection with making the school indigenous, it was urged out that more stress must be laid on Chinese elements in education. (We gave a review of the report of the Educational Commission in the May issue of the RECORDER).

This program includes plans and standards for the application of Christianity to economic problems. For the first time a Christian Conference in China spoke against child labour, spoke for a day of rest, for reasonable hours of work and healthy workers. Of course, to live up to these standards involves a tremendous task. This subject was presented by Miss Agatha Harrison and Mr. C. C. Nieh, a Shanghai Christian business man. Local business men in Shanghai also expressed their sympathy with these standards.

The program thus briefly outlined is one that if carried out means the conservation of all that is good in China and the improvement of economic conditions, enlargement of educational opportunity and a widespread promotion of evangelism.

The next achievement was that of a National Christian organization which pushes forward international, interdenominational and nationwide co-operation. It strikes a note of deep meaning for China. The Conference desired above all to find a way to continue working together and moving towards a common goal. It was finally enthusiastically decided to appoint a National Christian Council of one hundred. The principle of co-option was eliminated and the Council is therefore directly representative, and was appointed by the National Christian Conference. Seventy were nominated by the groups represented in the Conference. This seventy then nominated other twenty-five, the whole ninety-five being finally appointed by the Conference, five others to be appointed later on. Of those appointed, forty-four are Western and fifty-one Chinese, among them being twenty women, half of whom are Chinese. Since there were about one hundred and seventy electing units to be represented, some of them are of necessity represented by proxy. Thus was achieved a co-operative plan of work for the Chinese Church and with the primacy of

Chinese leadership recognized in the composition of the Council and to be recognized in its secretariat. This Council will study Christian work in China and endeavour to discover the mind of the Christian movement and reveal it in suitable plans. It will also endeavour to keep the "Survey" up to date. (Mr. Oldham's article given *in extenso* will make its function clear.)

It is also true to say that a greater measure of self-consciousness on the part of the Chinese Church was achieved. Indeed, one felt that the Conference was the first impulse of a tidal wave of a Chinese Christian movement. This was, of course, stimulated somewhat by present-day national consciousness, but the whole Conference was a reaching out for much more than racial or national independence. It was an aspiration for spiritual independence, and spontaneous service for China by Chinese Christians which means more than the mere desire that the Chinese viewpoint shall be given full place though this was duly recognized. Professor T. C. Chao spoke on the "Strength and Weakness of the Chinese Church," both of which elements are a part of this new consciousness. He felt with others that the Chinese Church does not yet fit China and is still too foreign. Furthermore, it changes a little too slowly to fit the rapid changes in its environment. It was felt that to meet modern needs the Chinese Church must search religion to its sources for itself.

Again, this Conference really achieved Chinese leadership. This is, of course, still numerically weak and possibly lacking somewhat of experience in nation-wide conduct of the Christian movement. But in sanity, breadth of wisdom and spirituality it is the peer of Christian leadership anywhere. The Conference proved that Chinese Christian leadership is now both free and articulate. This leadership is not simply a desire to dominate but to meet and do its duty.

CONFERENCE DECIDES TO STAND TOGETHER

But the greater achievement of this Conference was its manifestation of spiritual unity in the face of a possible split along national lines and a more possible one along theological lines. This Conference made the unity of spirit that exists actually visible. Denominational and racial interests slipped into the background. The Conference thought in Kingdom terms. In connection with the National Christian Council, the question of theological standards and safeguards for that Council was raised. Mr. D. E. Hoste of the China Inland Mission presented a resolution to the Business Committee on which he spoke before the Conference calling for a trilateral theological statement to be inserted in the constitution of the National Christian Council. This presented the

Conference with a knotty issue. To adopt it meant to make the National Christian Council a Church Council and to take to itself the authority belonging to the various Churches. To reject it might imply that the Conference was unwilling to say what was asked, which it was not. A resolution was finally worked out and presented by the Business Committee (this we have reproduced *in extenso*) in which the Conference expressed its faith in Christian fundamentals and yet recognized the freedom of the various groups represented to decide for themselves in this matter. It was definitely decided that the National Christian Council should not exercise ecclesiastical functions. This resolution was seconded by Mr. D. E. Hoste who announced that he had withdrawn his own resolution from the Business Committee which thus never came before the Conference. This resolution was passed by a rising vote and the singing of the Doxology. This was undoubtedly the highest point of the experience of the Conference. It averted a split which had hovered over the Conference. It indicated that the spirit of Christ had been left free to rise triumphant over disruptive tendencies. It was an achievement of the spirit—a broader spirit than that represented by any group in the Conference, but which permeated them all. It recognized the **essential loyalty of the members** of the Conference to Christ and yet recognized the freedom of their intellect and conscience. Thus, the Conference exhibited the most important element in the Christian Church—the Christian spirit. Undoubtedly the speech of Mr. H. J. Oldham, on the National Christian Council materially helped to this achievement (this speech is reproduced *in extenso* in this issue). As Archdeacon Wu said at the close of the Conference, "Opposition changed to approval." Only the moving of the Spirit of God can explain this achievement. In spite of racial, national and denominational predilections, this Conference was melted into one voice, one testimony—the souls of the delegates climbed above their group interests—no small climb! The Conference thus revealed a brotherhood of faith that will in time push forward a brotherhood of belief and polity. It provides that closeness of contact which alone can permit of clear understanding. To this result every group present contributed. As far as we know, hardly anybody in the Conference did not agree with the resolution. A few did not vote. Instead of pinning its hope on theological safeguards the Conference rested in mutual trust and in the sincerity of the loyalty of the delegates to Christ.

SOME EMPHATIC NOTES /

It was recognized that above all the Christian spirit must have free play. The whole Conference was dominated by the spirit which rose triumphant over forms and words. Dr. C. Y. Cheng in his final speech

as Chairman said, "The message of this Conference is a message of the spirit." He urged that this be kept uppermost by the delegates in interpreting the Conference to their constituency.

Responsibility for the evangelism of China was accepted in two earnest addresses by Rev. Lindell Tseng, Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Chong Hwa Sheng Kong Hui and Miss Y. L. Chen, a missionary under the Chinese Home Missionary Society. They represent an advance movement that will mean much in the next decade. Dr. Ralph Ward said, "China will be saved by helping to save the world." The share of the Chinese Church in this world-wide movement was seen though not quite so vividly as the task nearer to hand.

The needs of the home and the problem of making the home Christian received considerable emphasis both in commission reports and otherwise. Mrs. H. C. Mei spoke on "Making the Home Christian." Generally speaking, the home needs to be made more attractive and more deeply religious. The relation of newly set-up homes to clan and parents passed under review. The conviction is growing that, as Dr. H. T. Hodgkin said, "The Christian home is the creative centre for the Christian Church." This Conference focussed attention on the home and has indicated ways whereby it may be approached.

The need for, and the reality of, leadership by women was strikingly pointed out. The women leaders who took part proved the inherent fitness of women for full participation in Christian work. It was pointed out that the Chinese women leaders present were of the first generation, educationally speaking. For all one could detect in their platform work they were to the manner born in public speech. Frankly, they felt that the opportunities given women had not been equal to those provided men. It was intimated that the inhibiting factor is more noticeable among the missionaries than Chinese men. When one realizes their place in making the home Christian the urgent importance of heeding their plea for equal opportunity for training for leadership with the men is magnified manifold. They desire equal opportunity for education and service. As Miss Y. T. Fan, a secretary of the Y.W.C.A. said, "What is needed is not a statement of rights but a recognition of the need of women in the task." The emphasis in the Conference was not on work for women as women but work by women as an integral part of the work of the Church. The privilege of *equality in service* is the plea of the Chinese women and the need of the Chinese Church.

Just what point in the varied message of this Conference will mean most for the Christian Church of the West? Leadership in united manifestation of the Christian spirit! The vision of the Conference is stated in a Message for presentation to Christians of all lands. It is the vision of a united Chinese Church. While standing for an

indigenous Christianity the Chinese Church does not seek isolation and separation from the mother churches. This is the clear message of Chinese Christians to Western Christians, "We ask that they shall strive for unity among themselves so that we in China may be able also to unite and bear undivided witness to the mighty works of God." As Rev. James Webster, Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the United Free Church of Scotland, said, "The emphatic message of the Conference is that the Home Churches must unite." It is this note that will make this gathering in the words of Mr. F. S. Brockman, "A mount of vision: an historic occasion."

Other "Closer Fellowship" Movements

Union of Presbyterians and Congregationalists

A CONFERENCE on union of churches representative of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians throughout China, was held at Shanghai, April 27th to 29th. The Rev. P. F. Price, D.D., of Nanking and Rev. T. Y. Kung of Hankow were appointed moderators.

It was reported that organic union had already taken place between these bodies in the province of Kwangtung including Hongkong, in South Fukien and in Hupeh; while general approval of the proposals for union had been expressed by nearly all the Presbyteries, or Congregational councils throughout China. The following credal basis was adopted:

"Our Bond of Union consists: (1) In our faith in Jesus Christ as our Redeemer and Lord on whom the Christian Church is founded, and an earnest desire for the establishment of His Kingdom throughout the whole earth: (2) In our acceptance of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the divinely inspired word of God and the supreme authority in matters of faith and duty: and (3) In our acknowledgment of the Apostles' Creed as expressing the fundamental doctrines of our common evangelical faith."

With reference to this statement, it is provided that it shall be signed by all office bearers in the Church, also that other Churches that sincerely accept this statement shall be welcomed into the one fellowship. The plan of union provides that the Church shall administer its affairs through (1) the local church or parish, (2) the district association or presbytery, (3) the Provisional council or synod, (4) the General Assembly.

Certain details of organization were referred to the Executive Committee, but the main lines having been accepted after the singing of the Doxology, and prayer of thanksgiving, the meeting resolved itself into the Provisional General Assembly of the Church of Christ in China. The Chinese members took a very firm stand against using any denominational name for the Church, or even using the word "United."

The action of the Provisional Assembly will be referred to the Presbyteries and Congregational District Church Councils for confirmation. When two-thirds of these voting units have signified approval the substantive General Assembly will be formed. The churches interested in the movement total 120,000 communicants members which is about one-third of the membership of the Protestant churches in China.

A very interesting incident of the Conference was the visit of the Rev. J. Percy Bruce, D. Litt., who conveyed the greeting of the churches associated with the English Baptist Mission in Shantung, Shansi, and Shensi, and on their behalf expressed desire to enter the union. Dr. Bruce was welcomed with a rising vote, and the Executive Committee was instructed to correspond with the Baptist churches.

Rev. C. G. Sparham, 20 Museum Road, Shanghai, is Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Provisional General Assembly.

METHODISTS CONFER.

At the close of the Conference the Methodist delegates and the Methodists resident in Shanghai met and discussed closer union of Methodists in China. About two hundred were present. These included all the different groups listed under the term "Methodist" in attendance at the Conference. Bishop Birney presided.

The speakers representing all branches of "Methodism" were Dr. W. B. Nance of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; Rev. H. B. Rattenbury of the Wesleyan Church; Dr. C. N. Dubs of the United Evangelical; Dr. G. T. Candlin of the United Methodist; Rev. Charles Heininger of the Protestant Methodist; Rev. Mr. Frank of the Free Methodist; Dr. Endicott of the Canadian Methodist Board and Bishop Keeney of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Seriously, the speeches teemed with good fellowship, with a sense of spiritual values and an honest recognition of the futility of those barriers that divide not only "Methodism" but the whole Christian Church. In token of sincerity a committee was authorized to look into the matter of a common name and into the possibilities of closer union among the branches in China. That committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Hawk was, at a later meeting of "Methodists" held in Moore

Memorial Church, instructed to proceed as rapidly as possible and report progress at the end of six months. About six names were turned over for their careful scrutiny and consideration with permission to devise others if desired.

FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION.

At the close of the National Christian Conference such delegates as were members of the F.O.R. or interested in its principles met for a three day retreat at the Physical Education School of the Y.W.C.A. in Shanghai. A number of centres in China where the F.O.R. has circles were represented including Szechwan. A provisional organization was effected which looks to become Chinese as soon as possible. Mr. Bao of Peking was elected Chairman of the Conference. It was decided that the Peking group should act as a central office for two years. This group was given the responsibility of calling a National Conference to form a national organization. Steps were taken to put the F.O.R. members in China in touch with other groups throughout the world.

The present purposes of the F.O.R. in China were stated to be:—
(1) To concentrate attention on the problem of Christianity and War, in the hope of getting the Church in China to take the same position on this issue as that taken by the early Church, also twenty study the legitimate use of force. (2) Concentrate thought on the application of Christianity to moral and industrial problems, particularly in the hope of enlisting the active co-operation of many who are outside the Christian Church. "Child Labour" might make a good beginning. (3) To make experiments as opportunity offers in trying out the way of Christ for our common life. (4) To direct attention to the deeper issues involved in the ideas for which the F.O.R. stands. (5) To provide a meeting place for men and women of different opinions and nations, to find agreement in the larger truth and to realize their unity of spirit. (6) To study the problem of reaching Christians outside the Church.

Personal contacts, group conferences and publications were urged among outstanding methods to be employed. Plans of literature original and translated were approved. A cordial vote of appreciation of the work of Dr. and Mrs. Hodgkin in China was also passed.

The F.O.R. has thus established a foothold in China.

THE CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION OF CHINA.

During the past five years the Christian Publishers' Association has been drawing together the various Missionary Literature Producing and Distributing Agencies throughout China. The Annual Meeting of the

Association was held on May 1st in the Union Church Hall, Shanghai, and was attended by representatives of all the larger literature and tract societies and mission presses, and representatives of other Christian literature organizations. The Chair was occupied by the President, Rev. D. MacGillivray, D.D.

Applications for membership were received from the Trinity College Press, Ningpo, the Lutheran Board of Publication, the Council on Health Education, and the American Bible Society, bringing the total number of organizations represented in the Association up to twenty-one.

The point was made that present Christian literature contains too many "foreign" ideas; this was also shown to be true of modern books by Chinese authors. Emphasis was laid upon the necessity of making more use of good pictures in connection with Christian literature. The Chairman pointed out that the ultimate solution of the problems of Christian literature lies in the hands of the Chinese, but unfortunately so far they have hardly entered the field.

Rev. J. P. Bruce urged that at the present time local bookstores are only a very partial success, and must be made real live concerns, and to this end the man in charge must be trained and supervised. To effect this field agents were needed who should work in conjunction with a central bureau of distribution.

It was decided to publish a new edition of the Classified Index of Chinese Christian Literature originally prepared by the Rev. G. A. Clayton four years ago, and to promote local Book Clubs.

The following resolutions were adopted:—

"That this Conference expresses its sense of the urgency of the problem of securing a nation wide distribution of Christian Literature; it urges upon the bodies concerned the need of co-ordinating their efforts and establishing a system of Field Agents with Colporteurs and local Bookstores under their supervision.

"That in order to effect the establishment and efficient working of such a system the Executive Committee of the Association be requested to take steps with a view to organizing a central Bureau of Distribution of Christian Literature in China, and recommends the National Christian Conference to request the Mission Boards to grant funds through the China Christian Literature Council, or its successors, to enable the Association to carry these proposals into effect,

"That in carrying out the above resolution with regard to Field Agents the Executive Committee be instructed to co-operate, as far as possible, with the Bible Societies working in China."

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year,—President, Dr. MacGillivray; Vice-President, Dr. Darroch; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. C. W. Douglass; Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. W. Dovey.

Some Other Important Resolutions

The National Christian Council

I. APPOINTMENT

THE Conference, with a view to carrying forward its work, making provision for dealing with matters which concern the Christian movement throughout China, and promoting co-operation, resolves to appoint a National Christian Council.

It is understood that matters of doctrine and ecclesiastical polity lie outside the province of the National Christian Council. In regard to other matters the functions of the Council shall be advisory, but it is intended that the Council should act on behalf of the co-operating churches and missions in matters which concern their common interest when it has been ascertained that the action taken will be in accordance with the wishes of the co-operating bodies.

II. FUNCTIONS

1. To foster and express the fellowship and unity of the Christian Church in China and the realization of its oneness with the church throughout the world, and to provide an opportunity for united prayer and corporate thought toward this end.

2. To help make the central position of the Church in the Christian movement more generally recognized.

COMMISSION REPORTS

1. Whereas the limitations of time under which this Conference is being held make it practically impossible to give that amount of time to deliberate discussion and unhurried group thinking which will justify the Conference in voting upon any considerable number of resolutions and thus giving expression to its judgment on the large number of problems vital to the highest welfare of the Church, which have been considered by the five Commissions making report to this Conference and

Whereas the findings and recommendations in the reports of these five Commissions represent the best thinking of a considerable number of representative men and women, Chinese and missionaries,

Resolved that these findings and recommendations in the reports of the five Commissions be referred by this Conference to the churches, missions, mission boards and other organizations concerned, for careful consideration and especially that these recommendations be referred to the National Christian Council for full consideration and for such

emphasis as may be called for in carrying into effect those which may call for action.

INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

2. In view of the importance of industrial problems and of the present state of public opinion in China,

Be it resolved that this Conference expresses its endorsement of the following standards for industrial labour:

- a. No employment of children under twelve years of age.
- b. One day's rest in seven.
- c. The safeguarding of the health of the workers, by limiting hours, by the improvement of sanitary conditions, by the installing of safety devices.

That this Conference directs the National Christian Council to give these standards the widest publicity.

And that this Conference calls upon Christian organizations throughout the country to endorse these standards and to take action to see that they are brought into force in China as soon as possible.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

*Appointed by the National Christian
Conference, May 10, 1922*

Anglican

Rt. Rev. Bishop Sing, Ningpo
Miss C. J. Lambert, Foochow
Rev. Lindel Tsen, Wuhu
Miss Katie Woo, Hongkong
Rt. Rev. L. H. Roots, Hankow

Baptist

Rev. J. T. Proctor, D.D.,
Shanghai
Miss F. E. Coombs, Taiyüanfu
Mr. H. C. Lim, Swatow
Mr. Chang Ssu Ching

Congregational

Rev. C. G. Sparham, Shanghai
Miss Luella Miner, Litt. D.,
Peking
Rev. T. T. Lew, Ph. D., Peking
Rev. Lin Yu Shu, Foochow

Presbyterian

Rev. A. Weir, Manchuria
Rev. Kung Fan Sheng, Manchuria
Rev. Murdoch Mackenzie, D.D.,
Weihaiwei
Miss Chang Chin-shan, Hwaiyuen
Mrs. W. H. Lingle, Changsha
Elder Chang Ting-yung, Shanghai
Rev. H. F. Wallace, Swatow
Rev. Tsai Yung, South China

United Church

Rev. A. J. Fisher, Canton
Mrs. S. T. Law, Canton
Rev. Hsu Shing Yen, Amoy

Lutheran

Rev. J. A. O. Gotteberg, Changsha
Rev. Wilhelm Maisch, Canton
Miss M. Beysiegel, Taiping
Rev. Ling Teh-en
Prof. Marcus Cheng, Chinchow
Rev. Chu Hao-jen

Methodist

Rev. Shen Wen-ching, Wuchang
 Dr. Ida Kahn, Nanchang
 Rev. Wang Kang-ho, Foochow
 Rev. G. T. Davis, Peking
 Dr. Ida B. Lewis, Shanghai
 Rev. Z. T. Kaung, Soochow
 Rev. W. J. Mortimore, Chengtu
 Rev. Dr. G. D. Candlin, Peking
 Yu Shu-hsun, Wenchow
 Rev. Chang Chun-chin, Changsha

China Inland Mission

D. E. Hoste, Esq., Shanghai
 Miss Margaret King, Yangchow
 Rev. C. F. Blom, Yuncheng
 Mr. W. H. Hockman, Luchow
 Rev. Ren Tzu-sheng, Hangchow
 Rev. Shao Siang-yi
 Rev. Hsiao Moh-kwang, Changsha
 Mrs. S. K. Liu, Wenchow

Young Men's Christian Association

Dr. Chang Po-ling, Tientsin
 Mr. F. S. Brockman, Shanghai
 Dr. John Y. Lee, Shanghai
 S. C. Leng, Esq., Canton

Colleges

Rev. F. L. Hawks Pott, D.D.,
 Shanghai
 Miss Ruth Cheng, Peking
 Mr. Francis C. M. Wei, Wuchang
 Rev. J. M. Henry, Canton

Young Women's Christian Association

Miss Rosalee Venable, Shanghai
 Miss Fan Yu-jung, Shanghai

Others

Miss Mary Kelly, Nanking
 Dr. Frank Keller, Changsha
 Mr. Yang Shao-chuan, Chengtu

National Organizations

Rev. Dr. F. D. Gamewell, Shanghai
 Dr. W. W. Peter, Shanghai
 Mr. Pan Tzu Fang, Shanghai

Literature Organizations

Rev. Chen Chin-yung, Shanghai
 Rev. G. H. Bondfield, Shanghai

Christian and Missionary Alliance

Rev. R. A. Jaffrey, Wuchow

Independent Churches

Rev. Yu Tsung-chow, Shanghai
 Rev. Yuan Wen Hsing, Chefoo

General

C. C. Nieh, Esq., Shanghai
 Prof. Chung Wing-kwang, Canton
 S. T. Wen, Esq., Nanking
 Mrs. F. T. Sung, Peking
 Miss Tseng Pao-suen, Changsha
 Prof. T. C. Chao, Soochow
 Dr. David Z. T. Yui, Shanghai
 Rev. Pao Kwang-lin, Peking
 Rev. Dr. Cheng Ching-yi, Shanghai
 Mr. Wang Kai-ming, Canton
 Mrs. S. M. Wang, Hangchow
 T. Z. Ku, Esq., Shanghai
 Rev. Chia Yu-ming, Nanking
 Rev. K. T. Chung, Shanghai
 Rev. C. E. Patton, Shanghai
 Rev. E. C. Lobenstine, Shanghai
 Rev. R. E. Chandler, Tientsin
 Rt. Rev. T. A. Scott, D.D.,
 Shantung
 Rev. J. L. Stuart, D.D., Peking
 Rev. J. H. Blackstone, Nanking
 Dr. Harold Balme, Tsinan
 Dr. H. S. Houghton, Peking
 Bishop L. J. Birney, Shanghai
 Rev. E. W. Wallace, D.D.,
 Chengtu
 Miss E. Nielsen, Manchuria

